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# General Assembly

*Official Records*

Disarmament Commission
**279**th meeting
Tuesday, 10 April 2007, 10 a.m.
New York

*Chairman:* Mr. Rosselli ..... (Uruguay)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.*

**General exchange of views (*continued*)**

**Mr. Grout** (Canada): I am honoured to join representatives here today at this session of the Disarmament Commission. The Canadian delegation looks forward to a productive discussion over the coming weeks. We will do our part to work towards a successful outcome.

Each part of the United Nations disarmament machinery has an important role to play. The Conference on Disarmament in Geneva is the forum in which disarmament and non-proliferation treaties are negotiated. The First Committee of the General Assembly is the forum for producing resolutions on topics from the entire field of non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament.

The role of the Disarmament Commission is no less important. It is the deliberative forum in which dynamic and innovative ideas can be discussed frankly and openly by all United Nations Member States. Some ideas may gain momentum and help make concrete contributions to non-proliferation and disarmament efforts in the fields of conventional weapons as well as weapons of mass destruction.

Notable contributions to international disarmament that originated in the Disarmament Commission include the 16 verification principles and guidelines for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. To see how both of those topics remain at the forefront of work in the field of non-proliferation and disarmament, one need only attend a session of the Commission to see how the topic of verification has been prominent in discussions on a fissile material cut-off treaty or observe a session of the First Committee to note how the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in many regions of the world continues to be promoted and celebrated.

*(spoke in French)*

According to the agenda before us, this session of the Disarmament Commission has two important tasks before it: first, to make recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and, secondly, to establish confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms. Both topics are of utmost importance to the international community.

Nuclear weapons are possessed by relatively few States, but they can nonetheless indiscriminately kill tens of thousands of people or destroy entire cities in one attack. Conventional weapons are much more widespread, and the sum of the death and misery they cause throughout the world every year rivals the terrible loss of life that could result from the use of a nuclear weapon.

*(spoke in English)*

On the subject of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, Canada has reviewed the Chair's non-paper and has provided comments. Generally speaking, it is Canada's view that the Working Group should strive to produce a substantive document that is both

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comprehensive and focused. Our efforts would be best placed on developing principles and recommendations for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament as opposed to other related issues, which may also be important but need not be specifically addressed in this document.

Canada recommends that the paper draw from the 13 practical steps towards nuclear disarmament, as agreed by the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. The majority of the steps remain relevant today and have yet to be fully implemented. Particular attention should be given to achieving the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, universal acceptance and full implementation of comprehensive safeguards agreements and the Additional Protocol, and the successful negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty.

On the topic of a fissile material cut-off treaty, Canada is hopeful that the Conference on Disarmament will achieve a consensus on the draft decision by the six Presidents of the Conference on Disarmament on a work plan for the 2007 session that includes the resumption of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty. We urge all member States of the Conference to support the draft decision of the six Presidents, which would get the world's treaty negotiation forum back to productive work.

Combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is also a priority for Canada. Canada supports the full implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and welcomes the adoption in the First Committee last fall of the omnibus resolution on small arms and light weapons, which, among other things, has scheduled a biennial meeting of States to be held no later than 2008. The humanitarian impact of the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons requires concerted attention at the global level. To that end — as announced at the conclusion of the 2006 United Nations Review Conference — Canada is working with other countries to host an informal meeting which will take place from 27 to 31 August 2007 in Geneva. That informal meeting will complement the United Nations process on small arms by strengthening implementation of the Programme of Action and serving to increase the effectiveness of the next Biennial Meeting of States.

*(spoke in French)*

With regard to conventional weapons, the States Members of the United Nations recently took a step that could considerably strengthen confidence, declaring themselves in favour of opening discussions leading to negotiations on a legally binding international arms trade treaty covering all conventional weapons. Canada fully supports that initiative and calls on Member States to work together creatively and cooperatively to establish common parameters for the international trade in conventional arms.

*(spoke in English)*

In conclusion, the Canadian delegation looks forward to participating in discussions and negotiations in both Working Groups. We are committed to working in cooperation with you, Sir, the Bureau and fellow member States to ensure that the Commission produces concrete recommendations that advance the goals of non-proliferation and disarmament of nuclear weapons, as well as establishing confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons.

**Mr. Akram** (Pakistan): Allow me to extend the felicitations of the Pakistan delegation to you, Sir, on your election as well as to the other members of the Bureau. It is a special pleasure to see a friend presiding over this important Commission. We assure you and the Chairmen of the two Working Groups of our full support and cooperation.

Pakistan associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

As we all know, the Disarmament Commission was created at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament to serve as a forum for United Nations Member States to deliberate on major disarmament issues. The concept was that the Commission could identify issues and, if possible, prepare the ground for multilateral disarmament negotiations.

Some may say that the Commission has not lived up to its potential; but that is also the case with regard to the rest of the United Nations disarmament machinery. This is not a failure of the disarmament machinery; it is a failure of political will to advance on the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda.

The impasse reflects the political reality. The consensus on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation has virtually broken down. The most visible and recent manifestations of this breakdown were the absence of any agreement on disarmament at the 2005 World Summit, the absence of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament and the absence of an outcome at the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

The consensus on disarmament and non-proliferation has broken down over time owing to several negative developments. First, none of the five NPT nuclear-weapon States appears ready to forswear nuclear weapons. Second, some nuclear-weapon States are seeking to develop new nuclear weapons, contravening their commitments and increasing the danger of the use of nuclear weapons. Third, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which was supposed to be a central pillar for the advancement of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, has no realistic prospect of coming into force any time soon. If new nuclear weapons are developed, resumed nuclear testing cannot be ruled out.

Fourth, the three nuclear-weapon States which are outside the NPT are also proceeding with the development and deployment of nuclear-weapons systems. Fifth, a fourth State, having left the NPT, has demonstrated its nuclear explosives capability. Sixth, in this climate of eroding consensus, over 20 States possess the technological capability to develop nuclear weapons within weeks or a few months. Seventh, other States have recently expressed new interest in nuclear technology. Some nuclear programmes of NPT States parties are viewed with concern and suspicion and are the object of coercive measures by the Security Council, as well as unilaterally.

Eighth, large stocks of fissile material exist in varying degrees of State control in many countries, including the nuclear-weapon States, the three ex-NPT States and those of NPT parties. Ninth, there is growing fear that non-State actors and terrorist organizations may develop the organizational skills to steal, if not produce, fissile materials for use in a dirty bomb. Tenth, the discriminatory application of non-proliferation norms is eroding the diminishing commitment of States to those norms.

Eleventh, the demonstrated failure of coercion, and even of military intervention, as a tool for counter-proliferation, together with the discriminatory use of non-proliferation norms, could embolden further breakouts from the NPT. Twelfth, the failure to take account of the underlying security preoccupations of States has also propelled proliferation. Thirteenth, the accentuation of the asymmetries between the major Powers and smaller States — for example through the development of anti-ballistic missile systems at the tactical, theatre and, soon, strategic levels; the steady militarization of outer space; and the build-up of conventional forces by major Powers — have reduced the disincentives against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and increased the incentives for threatened States to acquire nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction (WMD) capabilities.

Given the growth in the number of States possessing nuclear weapons, rising regional tensions, reliance on doctrines justifying the battlefield use of nuclear weapons, the ongoing development of useable weapons, the erosion of nuclear security assurances to non-nuclear weapon States and growing power asymmetries, the danger of the use of nuclear weapons today is as high as it was at any time during the cold war.

It is in that grim context that the Disarmament Commission could and should seek to halt, if not reverse, some of the negative trends. While recognizing that consensus-building will be a difficult task, let me try to attempt an identification of some of the issues which the Commission could closely consider with a view to developing a new consensus on disarmament and non-proliferation.

In developing a new approach, we must start from a basic premise: the recognition of the right to equal security for all States. The Declaration adopted at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (General Assembly resolution S-10/2, part II) adopted the principle of equal security for all States, both in the non-conventional and conventional fields and at both the regional and the international levels.

Second, in our interdependent world, equal security for States can be promoted collectively and multilaterally only, not through national means or within restricted groups, no matter how powerful.

Third, we must address the motives and compulsions that drive States to acquire weapons of mass destruction. These motives include perceived threats from superior conventional or non-conventional forces, the existence of disputes and conflicts with more powerful States, and discrimination in the application of international norms and laws.

Fourth, it is in the long-term interest of nuclear-weapon States to demonstrate a renewed commitment to achieve nuclear disarmament within a reasonable time frame. Without such a commitment, the NPT bargain will continue to erode. In any case, with large inventories of conventional weapons and no disputes between them, the major Powers do not need large arsenals of nuclear weapons. The eventual objective must be the total elimination of nuclear weapons within the context of an invigorated collective security system. The Conference on Disarmament should adopt a balanced programme of work to promote nuclear disarmament, not merely cut-offs, and should elaborate measures to halt a new arms race, especially in outer space.

Fifth, we need to develop an agreed approach for the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under appropriate international safeguards, in accordance with the international obligations of States and on a non-discriminatory basis. The advances in technology, as well as an improved International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections regime, have made it possible to promote proliferation-resistant nuclear energy. However, in building a new inspections regime, it would be vital to ensure that it is applied equitably, to both nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States, in accordance with their obligations.

Sixth, until nuclear disarmament is achieved, non-nuclear-weapon States should have the assurances that they will not be threatened with the use or the threat of use of nuclear, or even conventional, weapons. The security assurances offered by nuclear-weapon States need to be translated into a universal, unconditional and legally binding treaty. At the same time, nuclear-weapon States need to commit themselves not to develop and deploy new and useable nuclear weapons that would increase the nuclear threat and set off a new nuclear arms race.

Seventh, steps are needed to establish a stable and balanced security environment in sensitive regions such as South Asia. This would involve adequate nuclear restraints and non-proliferation measures, a stable conventional balance and the resolution of underlying security problems and threats. The multiplication of discrimination will not help in such regional stabilization.

Eighth, all States must commit themselves to implement agreed measures to prevent non-State actors from acquiring weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) was a first and urgent step. It is important that that resolution and the restricted regimes such as the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) be universalized through the elaboration of appropriate treaties.

Ninth, it is important to normalize the relationship of the three non-NPT nuclear-weapon States with the non-proliferation regime and secure their support for a revitalized non-proliferation regime. Reality and legality should be reconciled. Again, such normalization cannot be achieved by multiplying discrimination and double standards.

We hope that the Commission is enabled to reconcile and reverse the trends I have just outlined, and that it will begin to develop a new security consensus that addresses the issues of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in a balanced manner. Pakistan has circulated a working paper which we hope can help in the development of such a new consensus. A good example of building such a multilateral consensus was demonstrated last year in Geneva when the Sixth Review Conference of States Parties to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) succeeded in agreeing on a substantive outcome under the presidency of Pakistan. We are equally confident that this Commission, under your leadership, Mr. Chairman, can also replicate the BWC example in the nuclear arena.

**Mr. Minami** (Japan): At the outset, allow me to extend my delegation's warmest congratulations to the Chairman, Ambassador Rosselli, and the Bureau countries, on their assumption of these important posts. These roles are crucially important to our work to produce meaningful and concrete recommendations next year, based on our deliberations in the current session. We believe that continuing the active debates of last year is critical to achieving this objective. The Japanese delegation, which strongly hopes that the Disarmament Commission will make every effort this

year to demonstrate to the international community that it is fully performing its mandated function, assures the Chair of our strong support in his endeavours to steer this year's session to a successful outcome.

The international community is facing numerous difficulties in the steady and effective advancement of global disarmament. it will by no means be simple to overcome these difficulties. In order to realize humanity's earnest wish for a more peaceful and secure world, however, we must further strengthen the efforts we have made so far and take steady, step-by-step measures for achieving this goal.

If we look back at the past 12 months since our last deliberations, we can perceive a new breath of life being injected into the field of disarmament. A number of these positive movements deserve mention.

In the area of weapons of mass destruction, the Sixth Review Conference of States Parties to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) that took place in Geneva last year was hailed as a success. The normalization of the BWC process is particularly noteworthy, since it had been unable to adopt a final document for more than a decade.

In the area of conventional weapons, at the Third Review Conference of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) held in November last year, the States parties unanimously adopted a final document that included commitments towards the implementation of the Convention and compliance with its obligations. Furthermore, in December, an overwhelming majority of the States Members of the United Nations adopted a new General Assembly resolution on the arms trade treaty (resolution 61/89), of which Japan was a co-author.

Likewise, at the Conference on Disarmament, it is reassuring that the focused and substantive debates of the 2006 session have been actively continued this year. Japan strongly hopes that the Six Presidents (P6) proposal currently on the table will be adopted as early as possible in order to get the Conference on Disarmament back to substantive work as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. To that end, we encourage all Conference on Disarmament member States to take a forward-looking approach while displaying the necessary flexibility.

In the light of these positive developments in the field of disarmament, it is apparent that there are considerable expectations weighing on the Disarmament Commission. In order to further accelerate this momentum in the disarmament field, we must carry out positive and active deliberations over the next three weeks towards an agreement on beneficial recommendations for next year. We must demonstrate, whenever necessary, the flexibility for achieving this goal. We cannot allow any negative influence on the current momentum, which means we assume a great responsibility. Each country should bear that in mind throughout the current session.

With regard to the issues of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and conventional weapons, I would like to restate my country's basic position in my general statement today. I will detail my country's specific, concrete ideas on each agenda item within the respective Working Groups.

As the only country to suffer atomic bombing, Japan has consistently made nuclear disarmament a top priority. Japan's position is clearly represented by its General Assembly resolution on nuclear disarmament, which advocates a realistic and gradual approach towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Its adoption last year as resolution 61/74, with 167 Member States voting in favour is clear evidence that the international community shares that position.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is confronted by a variety of challenges. Nevertheless, the NPT remains the cornerstone for the realization of international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The next NPT review process, which will commence this month, is extremely important, given that the 2005 Review Conference was unable to reach agreement on a substantial outcome document. It was reassuring, therefore, that the participants at the NPT seminar hosted in February by Japan collectively recognized the importance of maintaining the reliability of the NPT. If the 2010 Review Conference is to be guided towards a successful outcome, constructive discussions will be required in the first round of the Preparatory Committee, and Japan, as the Chair-designate, is ready to fulfil its role.

As one of the main supporting pillars of the NPT regime, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is of great significance. In addition to jointly convening a Friends of the CTBT Foreign Ministers' meeting here in New York in September last year,

Japan has been making efforts to promote the early entry into force of the CTBT, including by inviting a delegation from a country which has yet to ratify the Treaty to visit Japan in January this year. We once again call upon all the countries that have yet to sign or ratify the CTBT to do so at the earliest possible opportunity.

Japan is determined to continue its work to intensify the momentum leading up to the fifth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT, to be held in September.

Furthermore, Japan will maintain and strengthen its active engagements in this field within the Group of Eight Global Partnership. Disarmament and non-proliferation education will also be continued and encouraged. In addition, Japan will make every effort to further strengthen nuclear security through effective means, such as the universalization of the additional protocols of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

From the perspective of promoting those disarmament efforts, Japan reiterates its condemnation of the nuclear test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and emphasizes that a nuclear-armed Democratic People's Republic of Korea cannot be tolerated. Although the agreement at the Six-Party Talks in February constitutes progress towards the abandonment by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its nuclear weapons programme, efforts for the full implementation of the September 2005 Joint Statement should be continued.

The necessity of confidence-building among States must be emphasized as an effective approach to tackling conventional weapons, which are actually causing much of the day-to-day destruction around the world. From this perspective, Japan is very pleased that the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, which is based on our 1991 General Assembly resolution on transparency in armaments, has become well-established as one of the vital international instruments for promoting confidence among States.

During the first part of this year's session of the Conference on Disarmament, vigorous discussions were carried out on transparency in armaments. During those deliberations the delegation of Japan pointed out the relationship between the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and current efforts to create an arms trade treaty. Ensuring the responsible transfer of weapons through an arms trade treaty and duly registering those transfers through the United Nations Register would further improve the reliability of the Register itself. In this light, an arms trade treaty and the United Nations Register are closely connected as practical measures for enhancing international confidence-building.

At the Tokyo Workshop on Small Arms and Light Weapons hosted by Japan last month, participants from each region of the world also undertook a beneficial exchange of views on an arms trade treaty in the context of effective measures for transfer controls. While continuing to work towards accomplishing the goal of ensuring the responsible transfer of conventional weapons through an arms trade treaty, Japan is committed to cooperating with each country to build greater confidence among States.

Those actions reflect the basic position of Japan, which attaches great importance to the United Nations framework in dealing with disarmament and non-proliferation. Japan would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm its belief that effective disarmament and non-proliferation can be secured through a multilateral approach aimed at reaching agreement among Member States — including those that produce and possess weapons — particularly in the discussions on conventional weapons, which are closely connected to national security.

It is widely known that Japan, as the only country to suffer nuclear attacks, strongly desires that such events never occur again anywhere on Earth. Above and beyond the example of the resolutions on nuclear disarmament and on small arms and light weapons, Japan is working tirelessly to promote disarmament and non-proliferation as a central pillar of our international diplomacy. Consequently, Japan welcomes the recently adopted resolution on strengthening the capacity of the Organization to advance the disarmament agenda (resolution 61/257). We hope that that resolution will contribute to greater efficiency in advancing the disarmament agenda, including through the activities of the Disarmament Commission.

Furthermore, while steadily implementing the six measures recommended for improving the effectiveness of the Commission's methods of work agreed upon last year, we must fulfil our primary task

of assisting in the building of a peaceful and stable international community.

**Mr. Hunger** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I should like first of all to express, on behalf of my delegation, my pleasure at seeing you, Sir, presiding over the Disarmament Commission, and to assure you of my full cooperation as you carry out your work.

My delegation would also like to express its thanks to the Secretary-General for the overview that he provided and for his support for our work. From the outset, Switzerland has supported the efforts of the Secretary-General in the area of restructuring, and we welcome the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 61/257, entitled "Strengthening of the capacity of the Organization to advance the disarmament agenda". We also very much look forward to working closely together with the new head of the Office for Disarmament Affairs.

The Disarmament Commission is now entering the second year of its three-year cycle, and it has already made significant progress in the course of the first year. For my delegation, the objective of this current substantive session is to find a basis on which Member States can negotiate recommendations during the third year. This means formulating the bases on which compromises can be reached. We must, inter alia, avoid taking extreme positions that would make our work even more difficult. In this context, my delegation welcomes the participation of our colleagues from the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. It is in the interests of all disarmament forums to work closely together so as to benefit from each other's findings and expertise.

With respect to the two Working Groups, Switzerland will make a detailed statement later in the session. However, I should like to briefly underline a few points here.

With respect to the agenda item, entitled "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons", my delegation would first like to thank the Chairman of Working Group I for the non-paper distributed on 13 March to the States members of the Commission. That summary of principles and recommendations forms a very comprehensive basis for our future discussions.

My delegation would like to recall that Switzerland has always regarded nuclear disarmament and the struggle against the proliferation of nuclear arms as matters that go hand in hand. My delegation therefore very much hopes that with the resumption in May of this year of the review of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) we will be able to overcome the setbacks experienced during the 2005 Review Conference. The challenges associated with nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation have, in fact, grown even more complex, and my delegation would like briefly to recall some of them.

First of all, the adoption of Security Council resolution 1747 (2007) against Iran on 24 March 2007 constitutes a new phase in the escalation of tensions concerning the Iranian nuclear programme. At the same time, the situation on the Korean peninsula has shown signs of moving in a positive direction over the past few weeks. Switzerland remains firmly convinced that in these two issues, only a diplomatic solution — using multilateral tools — particularly as represented by the International Atomic Energy Agency — can resolve the issues in a manner that is acceptable to all parties and is in the interests of world peace.

Secondly, some nuclear-weapon States have decided to amend their nuclear doctrine and allocate funds for developing or replacing nuclear arms. In Switzerland's view, such decisions are contrary to the spirit of article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. On the one hand, those decisions could neutralize efforts implemented within the scope of article VI and weaken the chances of achieving substantial nuclear disarmament. On the other hand, they place a greater degree of importance on nuclear armament, and that does not make it easier to lessen the degree of attraction of nuclear weapons for countries that dream of possessing them.

Thirdly, the production of energy from nuclear power plants will increase in the future, especially in emerging and developing countries in which there is already a substantial demand for energy. Switzerland is aware that this development could increase the risk of proliferation and will call for the creation of new mechanisms that can simultaneously meet non-proliferation concerns for the inalienable right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy as laid down in article IV of the NPT.

Switzerland feels sure that these challenges can be overcome and that the international community has the necessary tools at its disposal for this purpose. Within this context, we have to do everything in our power to maintain the present momentum aimed at initiating negotiations, at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, on a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for military purposes.

With respect to Working Group II and the question of specific confidence-building measures in the area of conventional weapons, Switzerland fully supports the idea of focusing on the last meeting document submitted by the Chairman within the scope of our 2006 activities, which considers various proposals put forward at that time and clearly reflects the progress of debates within that Working Group. Basing our activities on this document will permit us to commence our deliberations on a firm footing.

Switzerland attaches particular importance to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. The Group of Governmental Experts that met last year, in which my country participated, was close to achieving consensus regarding a series of recommendations aimed at improving the Register. My delegation is especially pleased about the creation of a new standardized form concerning the transfer of small arms and light weapons, which could prove to be one of the most useful tools.

The Group of Governmental Experts also noted that the reach of the Register responds to security concerns more strongly in some regions than in others. In this regard, Switzerland supported the idea of creating a new category within the Register relating to small arms and light weapons. Although this proposal was not adopted, Switzerland remains convinced that attaching greater importance to the Register would encourage greater use of this instrument.

The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation is a key instrument in the promotion of trust and transparency among States. In the present situation, the notification measures required for launching missiles or space vehicles appear to us to be especially important. We can only appeal to States signatory to this Code of Conduct to fully meet their obligations relating to notification requirements and the submission of an annual declaration. In view of the importance attached to the question of proliferation of missiles today, effective measures aimed at making this instrument a universal one are needed. Switzerland therefore appeals to those States that have not yet done so to sign this Code of Conduct.

Switzerland is convinced that with the necessary political will, we will be able to achieve progress and create a firm base on which we can make recommendations at the end of our three-year cycle. It is in this spirit, and with a constructive and flexible approach, that my delegation is ready to contribute towards the deliberations of the Disarmament Commission.

**Mr. Islam** (Bangladesh): Mr. Chairman, may I begin by congratulating you on your election as Chair of the Disarmament Commission and, through you the Bureau upon their election. Felicitations are also owed to the Chairs of the two Working Groups. I am confident that the deliberations of the Commission, under your able and skilled stewardship, will reach fruition in effective results. I assure you of my delegation's full support in the proceedings of the Commission's work.

I also express our gratitude to the Secretary-General for his statement, which reflects his deep commitment to the cause of disarmament and non-proliferation.

My delegation fully endorses the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

This cycle of the substantive session of the Disarmament Commission convenes against the backdrop of multiple setbacks crippling the disarmament and non-proliferation machinery. Also, as we look back, we find the trail of disarmament and non-proliferation efforts beset by major and self-inflicting letdowns. We even regressed on some fronts, let alone not making new ground.

However, it is not that everything has always been disappointing. Indeed, there have been some flickers of hope, though rare. We saw a modicum of success in 1995 and 2000. The modest progress made in regard to the application of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards has been a welcome development. The Conference on Disarmament last year worked towards an agreed schedule, with particular efforts to reflect the security concerns of all States. We recall the productive sessions of the Disarmament Commission in 1999. In 2006, the Commission succeeded in overcoming the impediments

that prevented substantive discussions during the two previous years. What we need now is to look forward and build on these positive developments.

The best methodology for achieving disarmament and non-proliferation goals is to strive for them in a multilateral framework, in particular by activating the disarmament machinery on two fronts — the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament. In recent years the work of both has shown acute underperformance. We urge the Conference on Disarmament to resume negotiations on a programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and on a verifiable treaty banning fissile materials within a specified time frame. In order to retain the credibility of the disarmament machinery, we need to deliver some sort of agreement on recommendations based on the two agenda items of the Disarmament Commission during its current cycle.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) remain the cornerstones of the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. We reaffirm the need for full universality of the NPT, the CTBT and other international instruments, without a single exception. Yet regrettably, to date we do not have sufficient ratification of the CTBT for its entry into force. We appeal to the remaining Annex 2 States to ratify it as soon as possible. It is dismaying how the lack of political will on the part of some is eroding the entire NPT regime. We call upon States parties to the NPT to fully implement their obligations under article VI of the Treaty and the commitments of the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences. We urge the remaining States to join the NPT without further delay.

Bangladesh's disarmament and non-proliferation credentials are, as all will agree, impeccable. Despite having nuclear neighbours, we have consciously and unconditionally opted to remain non-nuclear. Bangladesh is the first annex-2 nation in South Asia to have signed and ratified the CTBT. We are party to almost all disarmament-related treaties, including the NPT and the CTBT. We have also concluded a Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA, including the Additional Protocols. These are tangible testimony to our commitment to the goal of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. We reiterate our principled position on disarmament and non-proliferation, as reflected in the outcome document adopted at the fourteenth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Havana in 2006.

We wish to recall that the greatest threat to humanity comes from the continued existence of nuclear weapons, their use or the threat of their use. Only the total elimination of nuclear weapons will provide an absolute guarantee against this threat. We remain deeply concerned at the snail's pace of progress by the nuclear-weapon States towards accomplishing the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. True, some old warheads have been destroyed. But it is alarming that the nuclear-weapon States, instead of disarming, are adding more precision capabilities to their existing stockpiles and are developing new weaponry. This enhances the propensity for their use, with a supposed reduction of collateral damage, thus lowering the nuclear threshold. This is in contravention of the negative security assurances provided by the nuclear-weapon States. We reiterate our call for a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States.

If nuclear weapons are perceived to buttress the sense of security and if countries appear to benefit from their possession, a rush for their acquisition will naturally occur. We reaffirm that possession of nuclear weapons can never enhance safety and security, because a nuclear war cannot be won.

Given this fragile disarmament and non-proliferation regime, weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, falling into the hands of terrorists and non-State actors has become a real possibility. Besides, precision capabilities make acquisition and use of these weapons more lucrative to the terrorists, with serious and adverse ramifications. We reiterate that the only foolproof measure to prevent terrorists from laying their hands on weapons of mass destruction is the total elimination of such weapons.

Bangladesh greatly values the regional approach to nuclear disarmament. We appreciate the functioning of all existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and call for the establishment of more such zones in troubled parts of the world, particularly in the Middle East and South Asia. Bangladesh reaffirms the inviolability of peaceful nuclear activities. However, it is disconcerting to note the use of extraneous reasons and the imposition of undue restrictions by some nuclear-weapon States to deny non-nuclear weapon States their right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy and technology. We

strongly advocate the unqualified implementation of the provisions of articles I, II and IV of the NPT in order to uphold the inalienable right of all parties to the Treaty to develop research, production and use of nuclear activities for peaceful purposes.

The proliferation of conventional weapons, fuelling conflicts and claiming a colossal death toll each year, is not a lesser threat than that posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Out of this growing concern, we reaffirm the importance of practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms. Confidence-building measures, when adopted in a balanced and inclusive manner, have the potential to augment international peace and security by promoting openness, understanding and cooperation and by generating trust among States. Confidence-building measures, therefore, can contribute significantly in advancing the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda.

The timing of this session of the Disarmament Commission could not be more propitious given the fact that it is taking place just before the start of the next NPT review process. In view of the dismal state of affairs in the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, this presents us with yet another opportunity to make amends for our failures. The series of past debacles must not deter us. We should seize the opportunity to engage in effective deliberations during this session and come up with positive outcomes to form a concrete basis and reference point for the work of the next review conference. Furthermore, all of us, but particularly the nuclear-weapon States, must summon the goodwill and political commitment needed to forge a genuine collective drive for attaining the common goal of disarmament and non-proliferation.

**Mr. Rachkov** (Belarus): I would like to take this opportunity, Sir, to congratulate you upon your election to the post of Chairman of the 2007 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission. I also extend my congratulations to the other members of the Bureau. Mr. Chairman, you may rely on my delegation's support and full cooperation.

Belarus considers the Disarmament Commission to be the important deliberative body that reports to the General Assembly. Notwithstanding the difficulties which the Disarmament Commission faced when discussing all the items on its agenda last year, it is necessary to move forward. At the current stage, further deliberations, conducted in an open and transparent manner, are a necessary prerequisite for reaching success in the future.

At the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit in Havana last autumn, heads of State confirmed that the issues of nuclear disarmament are of a high priority. Efforts aimed at nuclear non-proliferation should be in parallel with simultaneous efforts towards nuclear disarmament and should not be in conflict with the inalienable right of States to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. As a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, Belarus shares the Movement's approach to the disarmament and international security agenda and aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of NAM.

As a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) that voluntarily renounced an opportunity to continue to possess nuclear weapons before joining it, Belarus believes that it is important to maintain the integrity of the Treaty both in terms of promoting a balance between the obligations and responsibilities of member States and in terms of attaching equal importance to all key elements of the Treaty. In order to strengthen the NPT and to maintain the trust and commitment of member States it is necessary to implement not only the Treaty itself but also the agreements reached at the NPT Review Conferences in 1995 and 2000.

In 1999, the Disarmament Commission developed guidelines for establishing nuclear-weapon-free-zones. It is important to note in this regard that last year the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia was signed. My delegation welcomes this step by our partners in Central Asia. We also support the related resolution of the General Assembly, resolution 61/88.

Belarus is convinced that it is necessary to provide legally binding assurances to non-nuclear States. We support efforts aimed at the elaboration of relevant norms of international law. At the same time, we welcome unilateral declarations made by nuclear States with respect to their policies of rejecting the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States.

We would like to express our hope for a productive and focused discussion on the issue of confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms that will help to build upon the

substantive document discussed by the Commission last year.

Belarus is convinced that a gradual movement from simple to more complex bilateral and multilateral measures and agreements will provide a good basis for preventing armed conflicts and strengthening national, regional and international security. Confidence-building measures by definition should be based on openness and true cooperation. That is the only possible way of discussing and successfully implementing such measures. At the same time, we share the view that confidence-building measures are neither a substitute nor a precondition for disarmament measures.

On its part, the Republic of Belarus has been pursuing responsible and consistent policies in the field of conventional arms controls. Under the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), Belarus has destroyed nearly 10 per cent of all its heavy military equipment under the provisions of the CFE. Belarus was the first State member of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to have ratified the CFE Adaptation Agreement in 2000.

Belarus attaches great importance to the elaboration of additional bilateral confidence-building measures on the basis of the 1999 Vienna Document. Political arrangements on additional CBMs have been reached with all neighbouring countries.

The Republic of Belarus fully shares the international community's humanitarian concerns related to illegal small arms and light weapons, as well as to land-mine problems. Belarus continues its work aimed at the elimination of around 3.7 million PFM-1 anti-personnel mines, including cooperation with the European Union and other donors. The elimination of that kind of ammunition is most problematic from the environmental viewpoint and requires cutting-edge technologies.

In conclusion, I would like to express the hope of my delegation for a fruitful and successful 2007 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission.

**Mr. Mohamad** (Sudan): The African Group joins previous speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission at its 2007 session. We would like to convey a similar sentiment to other members of your Bureau. We are confident that, under your able guidance and leadership, this session of the Commission will conclude with fruitful outcomes. Let me add that we assure you of the full support and cooperation of the African Group.

The Group extends its appreciation to the chairmen of Working Groups I and II for their respective papers, which we believe could serve as a basis for substantive discussions on both agenda items.

The African Group welcomes the Secretary-General to this session of the Disarmament Commission and supports the reorganization of the Department for Disarmament Affairs by the creation of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, to be headed by a High Representative. We hope that this will raise the profile of the Department. The African Group wishes to express appreciation to the Department for Disarmament Affairs for its continued service to Member States in promoting the cause of global disarmament.

The African Group aligns itself with the statement made by the Ambassador of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and would like to reiterate the following.

The African Group stresses the importance of the Disarmament Commission as a deliberative body that examines and discusses specific issues in the field of disarmament and makes recommendations to the General Assembly. On that basis, the African Group considers the current session of the Commission to be very relevant in terms of the overall objective of general and complete disarmament under effective international control. The Group therefore expects useful recommendations to emerge from this session.

The African Group reaffirms its absolute commitment to multilateral diplomacy and its strong belief in the promotion of multilateralism in the field of disarmament as an essential way of strengthening universal peace and security and the pursuit of our common interests in that area. The Group joins other States members of the Non-Aligned Movement in expressing its deep concern at the growing resort to unilateralism in addressing issues of multilateral interest.

The African Group remains convinced that nuclear weapons pose a great threat to international peace and security and that the most effective means of achieving nuclear disarmament is the commencement

of multilateral negotiations leading to the early conclusion of a convention prohibiting the development, production, testing, deployment, stockpiling, transfer, and the threat of use or use of nuclear weapons, their means of delivery and related materials. Among the first steps towards the realization of that objective should be a commitment by nuclear-weapon States to immediately stop the qualitative improvement, development, production and stocking of nuclear warheads and their delivery systems. Pending the total elimination of those nuclear weapons, a legally binding international instrument should be established under which the nuclear-weapon States would undertake not to be the first to use nuclear weapons and not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States. The African Group stresses the importance of ensuring that any meaningful nuclear-weapon disarmament process should be irreversible, transparent and verifiable.

The African Group recognizes that the tenth special session of the General Assembly — the first special session devoted to disarmament — was a turning point in the history of multilateral efforts to achieve disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament. The Group however, regrets the non-implementation of the Final Document of the tenth special session 29 years after its adoption.

The African Group notes the importance of the Conference on Disarmament as the only multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament. It is, however, a matter of deep concern that over the years there has been a lack of progress in that multilateral body, particularly its inability to agree on its programme of work. The Group regrets the continued failure of the Conference on Disarmament to establish an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament and stresses the need to start negotiations on the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified time-frame, leading to a nuclear weapons convention. We are, however, encouraged by recent developments in the Conference, which we hope will lead to sustained progress on the issues before it.

The African Group reaffirms its belief in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as a vital instrument in the maintenance of international peace and security. While regretting the outcome of the 2005 NPT Review Conference, the Group endorses the measures adopted at the 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences, in particular the 13 practical steps adopted at the 2000 NPT Review Conference for systematic and progressive efforts to implement article VI of the NPT, including the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, leading to nuclear disarmament, to which all States parties are committed under article VI.

The African Group recalls the solemn declaration of the Organization of African Unity on the denuclearization of Africa, adopted at the first Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization, held in Cairo from 17 to 21 July 1964, and General Assembly resolution 2033 (XX), on the denuclearization of Africa, adopted on 3 December 1965. The Group reiterates the need for a balanced and non-selective implementation of the provisions of the NPT, taking into account the commitments undertaken pursuant to article VI of the Treaty. In that respect, the African Group recalls also the inalienable right of the States parties to the NPT to the peaceful use of nuclear energy for economic and social development purposes, as underlined during the African conference on nuclear energy, held recently in Algiers from 9 to 10 January.

The African Group emphasizes the importance of consolidating the existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and the establishment of new nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned. Nuclear-weapon-free zones play an important role in the maintenance of regional peace and security. In that regard, the African Group calls for the early ratification of the Treaties of Pelindaba and Rarotonga by the States of the regions concerned to facilitate their entry into force, and it urges those nuclear-weapon States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the relevant protocols to the nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties, thus guaranteeing security assurances to the countries of the regions concerned.

The African Group strongly supports the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The Group calls on countries in the region to take practical and urgent steps for the implementation of proposals for the establishment of such a zone. It urges countries of the Middle East to refrain from producing, acquiring or possessing nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices; to also refrain from permitting the stationing of nuclear weapons on their territories by any third party; and to agree to place

their nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards.

In line with the Final Document of the fourteenth Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, held at Havana, Cuba, from 14 to 16 September 2006, the African Group reaffirms its long-standing position in favour of the total elimination of nuclear testing. The Group stresses the importance of achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, including by all nuclear-weapon States, which, among other actions, should contribute to the process of nuclear disarmament. The Group reiterates that, if the objectives of the Treaty are to be fully realized, the continued commitment to nuclear disarmament of all States signatories — especially the nuclear-weapon States — will be most essential.

Concerning the second substantive item of the agenda, on confidence-building measures, the African Group remains convinced that the ultimate goal of such measures in the field of conventional arms is to strengthen international peace and security and to contribute to the prevention of war. The Group shares the belief that the essence of confidence-building is to guarantee to States a peaceful and stable political environment in which international relations are governed by clear, predictable and strictly observed norms of international law, which will create conditions that will promote the social, economic and cultural well-being of their peoples.

Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms should fully respect the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The African Group believes that confidence-building measures should not be a substitute or a precondition for disarmament measures and that they should not divert attention from such measures. Confidence-building measures should be developed and applied on a voluntary and reciprocal basis, and they should have as an objective the principle of undiminished security for all. The African Group emphasizes the importance of confidence-building measures at the regional level as crucial to enhancing regional peace and security. The African Group underscores the importance of transparency and the verification process in promoting confidence-building measures in disarmament.

The African Group further notes with deep concern the recent trend of rising global military expenditures — which, according to available information, are likely to exceed $1 trillion this year — and calls for the reduction of military expenditures in order to release funds needed for development, especially the development of the African continent. The Group believes that a reduction of military budgets is an important confidence-building measure that can contribute to global peace and security.

The African Group is deeply concerned about the illicit transfer, manufacture and circulation of small arms and light weapons and about their excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread in many regions of the world, especially in Africa. The African Group notes that the first United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects did not produce an outcome document. Nonetheless, it served to highlight the importance of the objectives of the United Nations Programme of Action adopted by consensus in 2001, which outlined a realistic, achievable and comprehensive approach to addressing the problems associated with the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons at the national, regional and global levels. The African Group reaffirms its belief in the implementation of the Programme of Action as an important confidence-building measure in the field of disarmament.

The Group supports all regional and subregional initiatives in Africa, as well as in other regions, in the fight against the illicit proliferation of small arms. The Group reaffirms its commitment to the Bamako ministerial Declaration of 2000 containing an African common position on the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons.

**Mr. Pak Gil Yon** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I congratulate you, Sir, on behalf of the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, on your election as Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission at its 2007 substantive session, and look forward to the success of the current session under your skilful chairmanship.

Today, the world is hastening an arms race against the expectations for disarmament after the end of the cold war. We are witnessing an increase in

military expenditure every year and in the briskness of arms markets. We feel uneasy and insecure more than ever, watching a powerful country threatening others with nuclear weapons and occupying weak and small countries by force.

The reality shows that responsibilities for disarmament lie mainly with the world Powers. They are increasing military spending. They are profiting from the arms trade. They are inciting an arms race. Specifically, the United States is developing new types of nuclear weapons on the premise of a pre-emptive nuclear strike and expanding the arms race into outer space. As long as there is a nuclear doctrine pursuing the use of nuclear weapons and competition to monopolize the weapons market, the United Nations debate on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation will be empty talk, and the wishes for a nuclear-free world and peace cannot be realized.

Today, the world's attention is focused on the nuclear issue of the Korean peninsula. The nuclear issue of the Korean peninsula is a direct product of the hostile policy of the United States towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Bush administration has designated the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as part of an axis of evil and an outpost of tyranny, and threatened a pre-emptive nuclear strike. In such compelling circumstances, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had no choice but to make nuclear weapons to counter the constant United States threat of nuclear attack. Last October, it carried out a nuclear test successfully. That is a reasonable exercise of our sovereign right to defend our territory; population and social system from foreign attack and invasion.

The denuclearization of the Korean peninsula is one of the lifetime teachings of the Great Leader President Kim Il Sung, and the consistent position of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea remains firm and unchanged in its will to implement the joint statement of 19 September 2005 and the agreement of 13 February 2007. We are now doing our best to do what we are expected to do under the agreement. The Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency has already visited Pyongyang at our invitation.

The resolution of the nuclear issue depends entirely on the attitude of the United States. The agreement of 13 February was possible only because the United States promised to lift financial sanctions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea within 30 days. However, the money has not reached our hands, although the United States declared a lifting of the sanctions. It is not simply a question of money; it is rather a question of credibility.

The United States is now staging joint war exercises in South Korea against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, despite the 13 February agreement. How can we trust the United States when it speaks of having no intention to attack? War exercises are incompatible with talks. The United States should act upon its words of "reconciliation and normalization" and "peace and stability", refraining from acts hindering the implementation of the agreement and progress of the talks.

If the United States faithfully implements its commitments on the principle of action for action, as agreed by the six parties, the process of the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula will be smoothly pushed forward. Above all, it should dismantle financial sanctions, the intensive embodiment of the hostile policy against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

We will return to the Six-Party Talks when the question of financial sanctions is fully settled.

**Mr. Prasad** (India): Please accept my delegation's warm felicitations, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission. You have our fullest cooperation. We are confident that, under your guidance, members of the Commission will carry forward their constructive engagement on both the substantive agenda issues, so that the Commission will be in a position to finalize its recommendations on them at our next session, in 2008. We would also like to take the opportunity to congratulate Mr. Jean-Francis Zinzou of Benin and Mr. Carlos Duarte of Brazil, Chairpersons of Working Groups I and II, respectively, and to compliment them on the work that they accomplished at the 2006 session of the Commission.

India has consistently contributed to the work of the Commission in a positive way. As a deliberative body, the Commission evaluates and assesses the prevailing situation, outlines the objectives of the specific issues it is mandated to discuss, taking into account the concerns and priorities of all its members,

and, based on these, considers and agrees upon principles, guidelines or recommendations. Mindful of this mandate, my delegation will be ready to work with others to enable the Commission to reach its conclusions by consensus on both of the agenda issues.

The tenor and content of the discussions held last year on the mandate of Working Group I, to make recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, focused on our common and ultimate goal: to seek the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. The statement read out on behalf of Non-Aligned Movement member States by the delegation of Indonesia yesterday reflects this, as well as the resolute view of United Nations Member States, reflected in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2) and in the Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2): that nuclear disarmament is the most important issue on the global disarmament agenda.

India remains fully committed to the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world, to be realized through global, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament. During the course of last year's discussions, we spelled out India's specific proposals to build a consensus that could strengthen the ability of the international community to move towards the goal of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, which we view as two ends of a single continuum. In order to facilitate consideration of practical steps and recommendations for that purpose, we have separately requested the Commission's secretariat to circulate the text of India's working paper on nuclear disarmament, presented at the sixty-first session of the First Committee of the General Assembly on 6 October 2006 (see A/C.1/61/5, annex), as a working paper of Working Group I. We shall spell out India's perspectives on the ways and means to achieve the twin objectives of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in the deliberations of the Working Group devoted to that issue.

In Working Group II, in considering practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons, we not only have the results of the discussions last year, but we also have the inheritance of exchanges on the issue between 2001 and 2003. In our deliberations, we should be mindful of the need to reach consensus, having already had four years of discussions on this issue. We should therefore make every effort to build on the large measure of convergence already achieved.

India fully supports the adoption of bilateral, regional and global confidence-building measures, freely arrived at by the participating States. The core objectives of confidence-building measures include risk reduction, prevention of accidental war, prevention of crises and management of dialogue in times of crisis, and mitigation of misunderstanding and misinterpretation of military activities, thereby promoting a stable environment of peace and security between and among States. India has initiated and concluded a number of unilateral and bilateral confidence-building measures in Asia to build trust and confidence and ensure greater transparency. We are continuing to seek further measures to prevent misunderstandings and promote a stable environment of peace and security with the countries of our neighbourhood. In congruence with our practice, we hope to contribute further to the deliberations of Working Group II.

The Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, in his thoughtful address yesterday, spoke of his personal vocation, from his very first day in office, of revitalizing the international disarmament agenda as well as the effectiveness of the United Nations in that area. He said he was looking to this Commission for ideas and leadership. Speaking for my delegation, India is ready to respond to the Secretary-General's call to help reinvigorate the global disarmament agenda. We look forward to working purposefully with other delegations to achieve this.

**Mr. Al-Qassemi** (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. Chairman, allow me first of all to congratulate you on your work and, through you, to congratulate the other members of the Bureau. We wish you every success and look forward to a positive outcome of this session. The Republic of Yemen would like to express to you, Sir, its wholehearted support and cooperation, in order to ensure that the Conference will succeed in achieving results that will ensure international peace and security, development and prosperity for all peoples.

The Republic of Yemen would like also to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and to stress the importance of turning the Middle East region into a

zone free of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons. That, of course, cannot take place without the accession of all countries, including Israel, to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the total abolition of nuclear-weapon programmes and the signing of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) optional protocols and safeguards agreements. In that context, we stress that talk about nuclear non-proliferation will not bear fruit unless all States commit themselves to the provisions of those conventions and instruments and avoid double standards.

My country would like to stress the right of all States, including developing countries, to use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, for the good and prosperity of all peoples. The Government of Yemen has worked with all international authorities to implement relevant measures aimed at preventing the illegal introduction of nuclear, fissile or other radioactive material and to strengthen its coast guard in order to prevent trafficking in conventional weapons.

The Government of Yemen, convinced of the importance of these international goals, has put in place measures to control the illegal trafficking of small arms and light weapons and has made tireless efforts to establish a national committee for preventing the proliferation of such weapons, consistent with United Nations programmes and instruments.

We strongly believe that international realities impose a choice in favour of international peace and security. Therefore, we stress the importance of transparency, credibility and impartiality in our work in order to prevent any contravention of international law or of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, taking into account the importance of Articles 51 and 2 concerning the inherent right to individual or collective self-defence and a State's right to be free from interference in matters which are essentially within its domestic jurisdiction.

**Mr. Owade** (Kenya): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the 2007 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission. We have no doubt that the Commission will benefit from your wide diplomatic experience and skill and that you will steer our work at this session to a fruitful outcome.

We associate ourselves fully with the statements made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and by the Sudan on behalf of the African Group. However, we wish to expound on a few salient issues on behalf of the Kenyan delegation.

We express our profound disappointment at the general malaise and lack of progress that have characterized the disarmament machinery for many years. It was particularly disappointing that after the Disarmament Commission agreed on a substantive agenda after many years of inactivity, the conclusion of the 2006 session turned out to be a catastrophe. The Conference on Disarmament has yet to agree on a programme of work despite almost two years of focused discussions. The outcome of the 2006 Review Conference on small arms and light weapons was equally disappointing. This is a situation which must not be allowed to continue.

In his keynote address to the opening meeting of this session yesterday, the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, aptly described this situation — in which setbacks have become the norm, not the exception — as unacceptable. We welcome the Secretary-General's commitment to revitalize the disarmament agenda by, among other things, appointing a High Representative to head the new Office for Disarmament Affairs. However, it goes without saying that tangible progress in disarmament and non-proliferation can be achieved only through commitment to the principle of multilateralism and the goodwill of Member States.

The former Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, articulated a vision for the United Nations in the twenty-first century in which we would tackle security, development, and human rights simultaneously. In both "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005) and his 2006 report on the work of the Organization (A/61/1), Kofi Annan underscored the inextricable linkage of these issues. This vision, in our view, cannot be achieved without tangible progress in the field of disarmament. Development targets set forth by the Organization, especially in the framework of the Millennium Development Goals, cannot be achieved without progress on disarmament and non-proliferation.

How can we eradicate poverty when over $1 trillion is still spent on military expenditure each year? How can we hope to achieve the Millennium Development Goals when over 70 per cent of the meagre $10 billion United Nations budget goes towards peacekeeping and other field operations, compared to 50 per cent of a budget that was less than

half that 10 years ago? Is it not one of the greatest ironies of our time that the peace dividend that was expected at the end of the cold war has never materialized? Instead, we have recently witnessed an escalation in military expenditure, including on non-conventional weapons. It is a matter of great concern to my delegation that concerted efforts are being directed towards the modernization of nuclear arsenals and their systems of delivery as well as towards reaffirmation of military doctrines based on those weapons.

It must be emphasized that the only guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination. The status quo is certainly not an option. Similarly, a selective approach designed to address only one aspect — non-proliferation — will not work. Disarmament and non-proliferation are two sides of the same coin and must be tackled simultaneously. As a matter of priority, the nuclear-weapon States should make an unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of nuclear weapons. In this regard, negotiations on a legally binding treaty should begin without delay.

We hope that the forthcoming meeting in Vienna of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons will agree on a programme of work that will constructively tackle the Treaty's three components: disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of energy. The tendency by nuclear-weapon States to denigrate that third component of the Treaty — the right to peaceful uses of nuclear technology — must be resisted. In this regard, we reiterate the Plan of Action adopted by the African Union, which underscores the inalienable right of African countries to free access to nuclear energy and technology for peaceful purposes.

With regard to the second substantive agenda item, "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms", we reiterate the salient points articulated by Indonesia on behalf of the NAM yesterday. We only wish to add that as part of these confidence-building measures, the international community must agree on practical measures to control the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, which continue to wreak havoc and bring destabilization to thousands of civilians, especially on the African continent.

It is for those reasons that Kenya joined six countries from around the world to sponsor resolution 61/89, on an arms trade treaty, at the current session of the General Assembly. We deem it important that the international community should put in place a mechanism for responsible trade in these weapons through a legally binding instrument establishing international standards on the import, export and transfer of conventional arms. Pursuant to this resolution, the Secretary-General has sought the views of Member States on the feasibility, scope and draft parameters of a comprehensive and legally binding instrument. Kenya is convinced that an arms trade treaty is feasible and timely. We hope that all Member States will make constructive proposals to the Secretary-General within the timeframe set up for this exercise.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, we look forward to constructive and fruitful deliberations and assure you of our maximum cooperation in your efforts.

**Mr. Danesh-Yazdi** (Islamic Republic of Iran): I would like to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your election as the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission. I am confident that, under your able leadership, we will have a fruitful session this year.

My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Given the role of the Disarmament Commission as the sole deliberative body on disarmament issues with universal membership, we welcome the Commission's entering the intermediate year of its three-year cycle of in-depth substantive deliberations on nuclear disarmament. In view of certain setbacks and unfulfilled commitments in the disarmament area, it is high time for the Commission to focus on exploring ways and means for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Following the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the United States and their tragic aftermath, it took the international community more than two decades to come up with collective action in the form of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The Treaty was seen as a genuine promise to rid the world of the nuclear weapons nightmare. However, almost four decades after the entry into force of the NPT, real progress towards nuclear disarmament has yet to be achieved.

World public opinion is extremely weary of the continuation of this situation and rightly expects the nuclear-weapon States to take concrete action to fulfil their contractual obligations with regard to nuclear disarmament.

In 1978, the General Assembly, cognizant of the fact that nuclear weapons constitute the gravest threat to international peace and security, adopted the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament, which stressed nuclear disarmament as the highest priority on the disarmament agenda. In our view, nuclear disarmament is a major milestone towards the real objective of the disarmament process: general and complete disarmament.

In recent years, certain developments have presented serious challenges to the objective of nuclear disarmament. Those developments include, inter alia, the persistent refusal of the nuclear-weapon States, especially the United States, to fulfil the agreed 13 practical steps as part of an unequivocal undertaking to accomplish nuclear disarmament; the continuation of nuclear-weapon-sharing arrangements with non-nuclear-weapon States, in contravention of article I of the NPT, particularly through the deployment of nuclear weapons in the European countries members of NATO; the development and testing of new nuclear weapons in laboratory conditions, which run contrary to the spirit and letter of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT); the transfer of nuclear technology and materials to non-parties to the NPT, in particular the agreement on nuclear cooperation between the United States and Israel, whose nuclear arsenals present the greatest threat to regional and international peace and stability, and the provision to Israeli scientists of access to the United States nuclear facilities, thereby demonstrating the United States total disregard for its obligations under article I of the Treaty; the planned deployment of missile defence systems in various regions and the threat to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States; the advancement of new doctrines to justify reliance on nuclear weapons, especially by stressing the essential role of nuclear weapons as an effective tool for achieving security goals and foreign policy objectives, and targeting non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT; the development of new nuclear weapons systems, and constructing new facilities for producing nuclear weapons; and the resumption of efforts to develop and deploy tactical nuclear weapons, despite the commitment to reverse that process and effectively reduce them.

In short, the NPT nowadays is facing serious threats due to the adoption of a policy of negation, denial and refusal by the nuclear-weapon States, especially the United States, with respect to their unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the elimination of their nuclear arsenals. In that context, the United States continues to undermine the integrity and credibility of the NPT by obstructing the follow-up process of nuclear disarmament commitments within the framework of the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery, and pursues its own unilateral policies and priorities through more exclusive bodies and groups. We have a collective responsibility to restore the credibility of the NPT. To realize that goal, we need to address such daunting challenges collectively and thoroughly.

The NPT is the foundation of nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Our efforts in this body should be directed towards the mutual reinforcement of those interrelated pillars of the Treaty. The current session of the Commission should intensify efforts to adopt concrete recommendations in achieving the objectives of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Our endeavours should be guided by the following principles: to maintain and strengthen the integrity of the existing non-proliferation instruments; to reject attempts to undermine the inalienable rights of the States parties; to preserve fully the achievements reached at the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences; and to emphasize the authority and credibility of relevant international organizations, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), with regard to the verification of compliance.

The Commission should re-emphasize the unequivocal undertaking of the nuclear-weapon States to make systematic and progressive efforts to implement nuclear disarmament, and recommend appropriate measures for its realization. For many years, the Conference on Disarmament has failed to adopt a programme of work due to the lack of political will for negotiations on nuclear disarmament. To overcome that problem, the Commission should recommend the early establishment of an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament.

The threat of use of nuclear weapons by some possessor States is increasingly alarming. The Commission should not turn a blind eye to such dangerous threats and should send a strong message to those States by rejecting such illegal and inhumane policies.

Non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as recognized by the NPT, are of high importance. Those issues should be considered on their own merit, with due attention to the rights and obligations of Member States under relevant provisions of the NPT. Unfortunately, non-proliferation has been manipulated by a few countries as a pretext to advance their narrow national interests and to deprive developing countries of their rights to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

The negation of nuclear disarmament obligations is not the only challenge facing the NPT. Certain nuclear-weapon States, under the pretext of non-proliferation, have attempted to establish new mechanisms and precedents to restrict and deny the inalienable rights of States parties under article IV of the NPT to develop and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Efforts to advance non-proliferation are of the utmost importance. However, ill-intended attempts made under the banner of non-proliferation are increasingly pursued to deprive Member States of the use of nuclear material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes. Such attempts will only exacerbate the existing inequalities that are inherent in the NPT, and consequently lead to the erosion of the integrity of the Treaty and the benefits of adherence to it. Ironically, the same States are proliferating nuclear weapons horizontally and vertically either by transferring nuclear weapons technology and materials to non-parties to the NPT or by developing new types of nuclear weapons or modernizing them.

Thus, the Commission needs to reflect on non-proliferation in all its aspects and recommend certain measures to ensure the critical balance between non-proliferation obligations and the right to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. It should also reflect on reiterating the inalienable rights of States parties to the fullest possible exchange of nuclear material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes without discrimination, and on enabling the NPT States parties to exercise their full right to develop and produce nuclear energy for peaceful purposes under appropriate international monitoring and supervision; calling on certain groups of States to remove restrictions incompatible with the relevant international obligations imposed on States parties in the transfer of nuclear material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes; recognizing the authority of the IAEA as the sole competent international body to deal with the verification of compliance of member States with their respected safeguard obligations in strict observance of the provisions of the IAEA statute; ensuring the full universality of the NPT without a single exception and, in that regard, urging Israel, as the only country in the Middle East that has not yet adhered to the NPT, to accede to it without delay and to place its unsafeguarded facilities under the full scope of the Agency; reiterating the necessity to conclude without delay an international, legally binding instrument on negative security assurances pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons; requiring all States to adhere to multilateralism in addressing issues of non-proliferation in all its aspects; avoiding abuse of United Nations bodies, including the Security Council, as instruments for exerting pressure in order to prevent States parties from exercising their inalienable rights; and strengthening collective and coordinated efforts to prevent proliferation by anyone and anywhere in a non-discriminatory manner, and also to strictly prevent the spread of nuclear weapons.

Let me now turn to the issue of confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. We are of the view that confidence-building measures, if widely applied by all States, could enhance stability, peace and security at the regional and international levels. However, it should be noted that such measures are of a very complex and multifaceted nature. Confidence-building measures are widely considered to be voluntary measures among the concerned parties that should be implemented bilaterally or multilaterally and should not be abused or turned into legally binding measures. The complexity of the issue of confidence-building measures originates from the fact that they will not be effective and universal if the cold-war-era security perceptions of some member States continue to prevail. Almost two decades have passed since the end of the cold war, but, regrettably, thousands of nuclear weapons continue to exist as a means of terrorizing the non-nuclear-weapon States.

Confidence-building measures cannot and should not be seen in isolation from the international security

environment. While some nuclear-weapon States persistently seek absolute security by relying on their nuclear-weapons arsenals, it is unrealistic to believe that our common goal of general and complete disarmament can be realized in the foreseeable future. Therefore, confidence-building measures should be coupled with simultaneous concrete steps towards the elimination of nuclear weapons. To attain such a noble goal, the international community must pursue and advance disarmament in practice rather than in words.

**Mr. Churkin** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Our session is taking place in an atmosphere of significant transformations in the United Nations system. A new Secretary-General has been elected, and structural changes in the Secretariat, including those involving its disarmament sector, are being discussed. We believe that there should be only one vector for those innovations — the strengthening of multilateral principles in disarmament.

The Russian Federation consistently stands for the strengthening of a central role of the United Nations in the maintenance of peace and international security, genuine disarmament, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, and arms control.

We regret to state that the increased factor of force in global policy and attempts to use it to solve inter-State problems, to the detriment of the political and diplomatic methods and mechanisms of the United Nations, including its Security Council, have an unfavourable effect on the dynamics of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation processes. In such circumstances, more and more States are looking for ways to strengthen their own security by building up their defence capacities, some even by means of missiles and nuclear weapons. That, in turn, results in the unprecedented growth of countries' military expenditures and the development of an arms race. We can efficiently resist such trends only by ensuring the continuity of the interrelated processes of disarmament and non-proliferation, and the persistent strengthening of the international legal basis of collective security.

We are convinced that the emergence of new challenges and threats to international security places particular emphasis on the importance of adherence by States to the obligations they have assumed, and their neutralization should be effected on the basis of the strict implementation of existing international legal documents and the development of new ones. In our view, it is important to promote greater stability in the international legal disarmament framework, to bridge current legal gaps in the field of non-proliferation, and to prevent the creation of a legal vacuum and new areas of confrontation and arms race, including high technology.

Russia is committed to the total elimination of nuclear weapons as an ultimate goal. The achievement of that goal is a gradual and complex process in which all nuclear States should participate and which should provide for the maintenance of strategic stability and observance of the principle of equal security for all.

We proceed from the necessity to ensure the predictability, transparency, irreversibility and verifiability of the process of reducing and limiting strategic offensive weapons. We consider nuclear weapons to be a factor of deterrence and oppose lowering the threshold for their use and transforming them into a battlefield weapon. In that context, we are concerned about programmes to develop low-capacity nuclear charges and to equip intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched ballistic missiles with non-nuclear warheads.

Russia steadily fulfils its obligations in the field of nuclear disarmament. Thus, since 1991, the total amount of nuclear weapons stocks has been reduced fivefold and the number of nuclear warhead storage places decreased fourfold. We are ready to take further steps in that area on a reciprocal basis.

In that connection, we would like to recall that the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START) will expire in 2009. Simultaneously, article II of the Moscow Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions — which provides, in particular, for using the START Treaty to ensure control in the field of strategic nuclear forces — will cease to be in effect. That means that all control over strategic nuclear forces will be terminated. That is why we proposed to the United States to conclude a new agreement to replace the START Treaty. We believe that mere political declarations on confidence-building and transparency measures will not suffice.

Special emphasis should be placed on the relationship between offensive and defensive strategic weapons. An apt observation to that effect was made in

the preamble of the now-defunct Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems. The logic behind it is quite clear: any increase of missile defence capability by one side will impel the other side to respond by building up its strategic offensive weapons.

Because of that vital element, we cannot view the United States global missile defence system out of context, as a purely defensive measure. It upsets the strategic balance and leads to the development of a first-strike capability. The United States missile defence system is being extended beyond that country's national territory, involving some Eastern European countries and, according to United States military officials, Transcaucasia. The deployment of strategic components of the United States military infrastructure in countries adjacent to Russia's borders raises legitimate concerns and requires us to take adequate measures.

The danger of an arms race in outer space is another growing concern. We confirm that Russia's priority at the Conference on Disarmament is to seek the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, vested with a discussion mandate. Agreement to such a mandate would not rule out the possibility of subsequently steering the work onto the path of negotiation.

We have prepared a draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and the threat or use of force against outer space objects. We regard a future treaty as a guarantee that outer space will not become a new area of confrontation. We are planning to submit shortly the draft treaty for the broad consideration of our partners, as Russian President Vladimir Putin recently declared in Munich. Because of uncertainty regarding the launch of negotiations on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space at the Conference on Disarmament, we suggest discussing the draft text in the framework of thematic debates. We hope for the active participation of our partners in the discussions. We call on nations that possess outer space potential to follow Russia and other Collective Security Treaty Organization member States by pledging not to be the first to place weapons of any kind in outer space.

Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities can help to enhance security in outer space activities and strengthen international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space. The broad support at the sixty-first session of the General Assembly for the Russian-sponsored resolution on transparency and confidence-building measures confirmed the international community's strong interest in a predictable strategic situation in outer space. We believe that this provides an opportunity to develop and adopt appropriate measures. We call on our partners to facilitate the implementation of that resolution.

Russia strictly observes the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of their Intermediate-range and Shorter-range Missiles (INF) Treaty, which provides for the elimination of two types of land-based missiles with ranges between 500 and 1,000 kilometres and between 1,000 and 5,500 kilometres. We are concerned that, despite the provisions of the INF Treaty, intermediate-range missiles are being manufactured by the United States as target missiles. Furthermore, such missiles are being developed and adopted for service in some other countries. In that connection, we propose considering the elaboration of a universal international legal instrument on that matter to reflect the current realities.

Enhancing the non-proliferation regimes for weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems and related materials is another of our priority objectives. We consider it fundamentally important to ensure the implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in all its aspects, to enhance its efficiency and to achieve its universality. New challenges to the nuclear non-proliferation regime can and should be eliminated on the basis of the Treaty itself. In view of the foregoing, we believe that the priority tasks of the preparation process for the 2010 NPT Review Conference are to prove the viability of the Treaty and remove legal gaps in its regime. In our view, the NPT can be enhanced through the following three approaches.

The first approach is to reduce the attractiveness of creating a complete nuclear-fuel cycle by implementing multilateral approaches to the cycle. In that context, Russia has put forward an initiative to establish international centres rendering services in the field of enrichment and aimed at realizing the right of

every State to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. We believe that our initiative, the American Global Nuclear Energy Initiative and the six supplier States' proposal concerning guaranteed supplies are possible solutions to the problem. We are ready to work to specify and integrate all the proposals available in that respect.

It is necessary to finalize the work in the Nuclear Suppliers Group aimed at developing criteria to identify the materials of sensitive nuclear technologies and equipment. That would preclude the transfer of such technologies and equipment to any country with respect to which even the slightest doubt exists as to its observance of non-proliferation commitments.

The second approach is to enhance the IAEA's safeguards system and to universalize the Additional Protocol to the Safeguards Agreement with the Agency. It is important that countries, especially those carrying out significant nuclear activity or possessing considerable stocks of nuclear material, join the Additional Protocol as soon as possible.

The third approach includes measures in the field of nuclear disarmament and security assurances to non-nuclear States. In that context, we support the re-establishment at the Conference of Disarmament of an ad hoc committee with a mandate to negotiate under the agenda item entitled "Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons". We are in favour of developing a global arrangement on security assurances, in the understanding that it should take into account cases in which nuclear weapons may be used in accordance with countries' military doctrines.

We confirm the importance of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in different parts of the world. We support the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East. We welcome the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia and call upon all the nuclear States to support it.

We consider the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) to be a most important element in strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime. We are disappointed by the refusal of the United States to ratify it, which impedes its entry into force, especially taking into account that that State actively supported its development and adoption. In that context, we note that we acknowledge the importance of observing the moratorium on nuclear tests. However, to convince the world community that nuclear tests will not be resumed, it is necessary for the United States to join the CTBT and for the Treaty to enter into force.

There is a growing threat of nuclear proliferation associated with a potential alliance between weapons of mass destruction and terrorism. We thus deem it critical to enforce Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and bring about the early entry into force of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. The Group of Eight (G-8) Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, launched at the July 2006 G-8 Summit in Saint Petersburg, also aims to reduce this threat.

We advocate enhancing the effectiveness of The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. We insist that all participants unconditionally fulfil their obligations under the Code, particularly in terms of transparency and confidence-building measures. It is essential to commit all countries with significant missile potential to participation in The Hague Code of Conduct. The strategic goal, in our opinion, lies in formulating a comprehensive solution to the problem of missile non-proliferation through the elaboration of a global regime based on a legally binding agreement.

Russia fully meets its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and export control regimes to which it is party, and calls on other States to follow suit. We deem it essential to ensure the universality of the BWC and the CWC and to resume work on the BWC verification mechanism.

We are concerned about the situation with respect to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). Indeed, the NATO countries' non-compliance with their obligation of early ratification of the 1999 Agreement on adaptation of the CFE Treaty disavows past assurances that they desired the Agreement on adaptation to enter into force and puts at risk the very viability of the European conventional arms control regime.

Actions by NATO States — such as classifying a number of present NATO member countries under a group of former Warsaw Treaty Organization participants and exceeding key CFE Treaty flank limits by way of expanding the alliance — do not fit into the

modern situation and run counter to the provisions of the Treaty in force, as it was concluded in 1990.

The Russian Federation upholds the leading role of the United Nations in handling small arms and light weapons proliferation issues. We believe that the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons is far from exhausting its potential. We appreciate the substantive debate on ways and methods available to international society to combat illegal trafficking in small arms and light weapons, which took place during the United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action, held from 26 June through 7 July 2006 in New York. We regret to note the failure to achieve consensus on a final document due to the non-constructive position of a number of States.

We expect the international community to focus its main efforts on fighting illegal small arms and light weapons supplies, strengthening national anti-trafficking legislation and practices and expanding regional cooperation to find specific measures to prevent the uncontrolled proliferation of these weapons.

We note with appreciation the operation of the United Nations Register on Conventional Arms.

In our view, the Disarmament Commission, as a universal forum, should retain its function as an integrator of specific ideas and concepts, providing practical recommendations and outlining problems that call for the adoption of multilateral arrangements. We believe that the Commission's current status is sufficient to effectively promote the conclusion and implementation of multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation agreements.

The Russian delegation took advantage of the intersessional period to study thoroughly the outcome of the first year of the Commission's current work cycle. We are facing the complicated task of laying down General Assembly recommendations on the main items of the disarmament agenda in a generally acceptable document. We will be ready to put forth our specific proposals during the meetings of the Working Groups on the two substantive items on the Commission's agenda.

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): I call next on the observer of the African Union.

**Ms. Ratsifandrihamanana** (African Union) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the African Union (AU), I would like to welcome the convening of the current session and pay tribute to all of those who, through their well-appreciated contributions to these meetings, make tireless efforts to build a world of peace, security and justice. I would like to extend my warmest and most sincere congratulations to you, Mr. Chairman, and to all the other newly elected members of the Bureau of the Disarmament Commission.

Above all, the African Union wholeheartedly supports the position of the African Group, which was presented earlier by the Permanent Representative of the Sudan, current Chairman of the African Group.

With regard to the persistence on the African continent of internal wars and inter-State conflicts and an increase in terrorist acts, mercenaries, acts of major crime and violence, several decades after our States gained independence, the African Union attaches legitimate importance to this topic, which concerns us all. We remain convinced of the interdependent nature of the questions of disarmament, peace and security, development, democracy and good governance.

The African Union is continuing the actions initiated by the former Organization for African Unity (OAU) with the solemn Declaration of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU on the Denuclearization of Africa, adopted at Cairo in 1964. These include the 1997 Kempton Park Plan of Action on the elimination of anti-personnel mines in Africa, the 1996 Treaty of Pelindaba on a nuclear-weapon-free Africa and the 2000 Bamako Declaration on the illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms.

Since its inception in 2002, the African Union has stressed the strengthening of its institutions and policies in the areas of peace and security and disarmament, and also coordination with the continent's subregional organizations. I would mention in particular the establishment of an African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism in Algiers, the adoption by the Summit of heads of State in July 2006 of The Policy Framework on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development and the January 2007 African conference on the peaceful use of nuclear energy, held in Algiers. I would also recall the adoption by the most recent African Union Summit, held in January 2007 in Addis Ababa, of a decision to endorse

a Common African Position on the review process of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent and Eradicate the Illicit Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

In this way, the African Union reaffirms its resolve. It is categorically saying "no" to nuclear weapons and earnestly appeals to all producer States to uphold their commitments. The African Union also says "no" to the uncontrolled production, the excessive accumulation, the illicit trafficking, the alarming proliferation of conventional weapons and, in particular, of small arms and light weapons. These arms, theoretically used for peaceful purposes, are often diverted and are used to fuel conflicts, destabilize regimes, usurp power and carry out acts of repression. Thus, despite our vigilance, Africa remains a favoured destination for the small arms and light weapons which claim more victims daily and which increase the suffering of our populations.

However, alongside all peoples who love peace and justice, we maintain our faith and optimism, because in the proposals that emerge from our exchanges, we observe a growing aspiration for peace. We wholeheartedly associate ourselves with the proposals for confidence-building measures, for strengthened international cooperation, for renewed dialogue, for a collective approach, for an ongoing search for transparency and for an appropriate code of conduct for our armed forces. We stress in particular the need to give priority to multilateralism in the field of disarmament in order to be able to move resolutely towards our common objective.

(*spoke in English*)

Indeed, the efforts against the proliferation of nuclear weapons and conventional arms require the full awareness and commitment of the international community. We believe that, by working together on strong export controls and rapid detection of violations regarding arms production, trade and transfer, we will achieve our goal of general and complete disarmament.

The African Union underscores the importance of lasting cooperation between regional organizations and the United Nations, policy harmonization, better coordination and transparency in all our actions. We further reiterate the need for strengthening collaboration among all United Nations organs, bodies and agencies involved in peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

We commend all the efforts made by the Disarmament Commission and restate our appreciation of and our commitment to the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, which offers a concrete framework for intensifying efforts on disarmament in countries emerging from conflict.

We also stress the need for rapid implementation of all relevant international instruments and mechanisms, in particular the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which provides the basis of efforts to address security challenges. We welcome the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and underscore the need for its entry into force. The African Union encourages the process for the establishment of a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices and a treaty on the arms trade and arms transfers.

Finally, the African Union takes this opportunity to commend the Secretary-General for his initiative establishing the new Office for Disarmament Affairs. We are confident that this Office will greatly enhance support for the implementation of United Nations instruments, and we look forward to working closely with the Secretary-General and all United Nations organs.

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

**Mr. Pak Gil Yon** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): My delegation is taking the floor at this time just to ensure that the whole membership of the Commission better understands some of the points raised by the Japanese delegation.

Regarding the condemnation that the Japanese delegation mentioned in its earlier remarks, my delegation would like to suggest to that delegation that it should rather pay due attention to all the condemning voices of the world currently mounting against Japan. As we have repeated in many forums, with the jeopardizing, hostile policy and the increasing nuclear and other threats coming from the United States and Japan against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, my country had been compelled to build its own nuclear deterrent and successfully conduct its nuclear test. On that point, my delegation does not wish to go further.

Through its remarks, the Japanese delegation strove to give the whole membership of the Commission the very false impression that Japan is serious in the ongoing process of the Six-Party Talks. But, to tell the truth, Japan unreasonably persists on issues quite irrelevant to the objectives and goals of the talks, thus putting artificial obstacles in the way of implementing the 19 September 2006 and 13 February 2007 agreements.

The Six-Party Talks are a platform for discussing the issue of denuclearizing the Korean peninsula — and nothing else irrelevant to that issue. Japan also might be well aware of this. However, Japan kicked up a ruckus, politicizing and internationalizing a minor issue in a bid to scuttle the Six-Party Talks and to check the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

The participants in the Six-Party Talks should honour their commitments to serve the nature and purpose of the talks, with a view to realizing denuclearization of the peninsula and ensuring peace there. It is crystal clear that the talks can hardly be successful if any party taking part in the process insists on any matter that is irrelevant to the main purpose of the talks just to achieve its ulterior aim.

Everyone following the talks is of the view that, unless Japan is ordered to leave the conference hall of the talks, the talks themselves will prove fruitless and the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula will never find a solution.

The authentic nature and the true intention of Japan are solely to scuttle the Six-Party Talks and to check the process of the denuclearization of the peninsula. It is the fear of the Abe circles that the denuclearization of the peninsula as a result of successful Six-Party Talks might deprive Japan of any justification for going nuclear.

The Abe circle's theory of doing away with its post-war system and building a beautiful Japan precisely means a doctrine of domination and a theory of hegemony as it calls for avenging its past defeat — as a victimized State, not as a war criminal State — and realizing its ambition to again dominate Asia and the rest of the world.

Japan is not at all interested in the Six-Party Talks, in contrast to what is said in its statement; rather, it seeks maliciously to realize its mean and dirty aims of reviving its bloodstained past. In doing so, Japan will no longer be regarded as a partner in the Six-Party Talks. Therefore, it should, by itself, walk out of this process in a last attempt to serve and help the ongoing talks proceed properly and smoothly.

**Mr. Minami** (Japan): With regard to the points raised by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, I would like to underline Japan's determination concerning the Six-Party Talks. The point raised by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is groundless. Japan has been, and will be, making every effort with other relevant parties towards the success of the Six-Party Talks in order to re-establish peace and stability in the region.

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the Secretary of the Commission to make an announcement.

**Mr. Alasaniya** (Secretary of the Commission): I wish to remind delegations that the deadline for the submission of their composition of delegations is tomorrow, Wednesday 11 April, at 6 p.m. That does not mean, of course, that delegations cannot submit beyond that time. They can, but they should bear in mind that the document containing the original list of participants will be appearing by the end of the second week. Anything submitted beyond tomorrow's date will therefore appear in the additional document, which will be issued only after the session is over.

*The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.*

United Nations A/CN.10/PV.280

# General Assembly

*Official Records*

Disarmament Commission
**280**th meeting
Tuesday, 10 April 2007, 3 p.m.
New York

*Chairman*: Mr. Rosselli ..... (Uruguay)

*The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.*

**General exchange of views (*continued*)**

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): Before calling on the first speaker on my list, I will ask the Secretary to make two announcements.

**Mr. Alasaniya** (Secretary of the Commission): I have been asked to make the following announcements. First, I would like to remind delegates that the survey on the United Nations Disarmament Yearbook, which was distributed earlier, is still in force. We are asking delegates who have not yet done so to fill them out. They will be collected at the end of today's meeting.

Another announcement concerns the screening on Wednesday 11 April in the Dag Hammarskjöld Auditorium at 1 p.m. The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific and the Office for Disarmament Affairs would like to remind delegates of the screening of the film "Hiroshima: Ground Zero". By the way, Mr. Masa Kitanabe, a survivor of Hiroshima and producer of the film, will be available for discussions with the audience.

**Mr. Vila Coma** (Andorra) (*spoke in French*): Mr. Chairman, first of all, allow me to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission for this year. I also congratulate the Chairmen of the two Working Groups.

Andorra is a country without an army that has lived in peace for more than seven centuries. It does not produce or export weapons. Its devotion to peace is more than obvious, and that makes us very proud. This is why our country defends disarmament and would like to express its great concern at the lack of political will to implement agreements on disarmament and on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

This new session gives us an opportunity to evaluate the work done at the first session of the triennial cycle. It gives us the chance to take into account different points of view on nuclear disarmament and on confidence-building measures in all these areas. We hope that this session will produce concrete results and precise recommendations leading to an efficient outcome.

Andorra also welcomes the adoption of General Assembly resolution 61/257, which supports the appointment of a representative of the Secretary-General as head of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, giving this matter priority. Let us not spare any efforts as we negotiate a consensus leading to effectiveness. The world needs this more than ever to stop the drift towards an arms race, which constitutes a real threat to international peace and security.

Sir, allow me to reiterate our full support for the work of this Commission. We think the Commission is a useful tool to help us make real strides toward the consolidation of international peace and security.

**Mr. Hill** (Australia): There can be no doubt that the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) is among the gravest threats confronting the international community.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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The international security environment has changed markedly since the end of the cold war. Globalization has increased the opportunities for States to acquire or develop WMDs. Moreover, with the rise of transnational terrorism, we confront the possibility of terrorists fulfilling their desire to obtain and use WMDs. In this complex global environment, Government strategies must be multidimensional, making full use of the range of tools developed to curb the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

Australia is a strong supporter of multilateral approaches to non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament. The major treaties, including the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and measures such as Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), are central to maintaining shared international standards in this area. We also strongly support practical measures that reinforce the multilateral treaties, such as the export control regimes. Australia readily embraced the Proliferation Security Initiative as an important means to strengthen international cooperation on combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and we are pleased that support for the Initiative continues to grow. We encourage those States that have not expressed support for the initiative to look again at the practical ways in which it can contribute to the security of us all.

In July 2006, Australia accepted an invitation to join the United States-Russian Federation-led Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism as an inaugural member. Members have adopted a work plan which includes the Asia-Pacific seminar on combating nuclear terrorism, a regional outreach meeting which Australia will host in Sydney in May of this year.

Like others, Australia considers that balanced and progressive steps towards nuclear disarmament are vital to the continued political strength and vitality of the NPT. But we should be clear that the burden of responsibility is not that of the nuclear-weapon States alone. All States must contribute by ensuring an environment conducive to nuclear disarmament. A world free of nuclear weapons will not be achieved without complete and permanent assurances of non-proliferation.

Of serious concern in this context are the cases of Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Iran has committed serious violations of its NPT nuclear safeguards obligations and is continuing development of its uranium enrichment programme in defiance of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors and the Security Council. Iran must comply with the IAEA Board and Security Council resolutions, including by suspending all uranium enrichment-related activities.

Australia strongly condemns the nuclear weapon test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in October 2006. However, Australia joined many others in welcoming the statement released on 13 February following the Six-Party Talks in Beijing, which commits the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to move quickly to begin resolving the serious international concerns over its nuclear programme. We look forward to North Korea matching its commitments with practical action.

We should have no doubt that the cases of Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are not just a challenge for the nuclear non-proliferation regime. They also detract from the environment of confidence essential for progress on nuclear disarmament.

Australia remains committed to addressing the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons through the United Nations Programme of Action. In addition to national measures to curb small arms and light weapons proliferation, we will continue to provide practical assistance to affected States in our region. However, cooperation at the international level is essential if we are to stem the flow of illicit weapons and reduce their devastating impact on peoples' lives.

Despite the enormous efforts of States to rid the world of anti-personnel landmines, they continue to pose a huge humanitarian threat and a barrier to development. As current President of the Mine Ban Convention, Australia has strived to promote the universalization and implementation of the Convention through its President's action plan. In 2007, Australia will support anti-personnel landmine clearance, survivor assistance and mine risk education in Cambodia, Laos, Viet Nam, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Angola and Uganda.

Australia, like other countries, is concerned about the potential threat to international civil aviation posed by the acquisition and use of shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles or man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS) by terrorist and other non-State groups.

In cooperation with others, Australia is playing a leading role in international efforts to counter the proliferation of these weapons. As Chair of the Wassenaar Arrangement Plenary in 2006, Australia conducted outreach on MANPADS to selected non-Wassenaar countries. Australia continues to work bilaterally, regionally and multilaterally to help counter the illicit proliferation of MANPADS. Our approach includes efforts to enhance coordination of regional capacity-building assistance activities to help strengthen MANPADS export controls and stockpile management practices, and helping Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC) economies with their 2005 Busan commitment to undertake MANPADS airport vulnerability assessments.

Australia believes that the irresponsible or illicit transfer of conventional arms and their components is of such grave and pressing concern that the problem can be adequately addressed only through the establishment of a legally binding treaty. Australia was proud to be one of the co-authors of General Assembly resolution 61/89, on an arms trade treaty, and welcomes the overwhelming majority which supported the resolution at the sixty-first session of the Assembly. We encourage all States to respond to the Secretary-General by 30 April with views on the scope, feasibility and parameters of an arms trade treaty.

The issues discussed in this forum bear on the security interests of all States. They are too important for all Commission members not to embrace this opportunity to make practical and pragmatic contributions to address contemporary challenges. We therefore look forward to the Commission developing practical recommendations for achieving the objectives of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and making meaningful progress towards agreement on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons.

**Mr. Chabar** (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission, and to assure you of my delegation's full support in accomplishing your duties. My congratulations go also to the other members of the Bureau.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Jean-Francis Régis Zinsou and Mr. Carlos Sergio Sobral Duarte, Chairmen of Working Groups I on nuclear questions and II on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons respectively, for the quality of the work undertaken since last year. In this regard, my delegation would like to say at the outset that the documents presented by the Chairmen of Working Groups I and II are a good basis for our work to achieve, we would hope, a consensus as soon as possible.

Finally, my country associates itself with the statements made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by the representative of the Sudan on behalf of the African Group.

The Kingdom of Morocco was very pleased to see that in 2006 the deliberations of the Disarmament Commission were back on track after several years of paralysis. I venture to hope that this year's session will allow us to consolidate the gains of 2006 and to make significant progress on the two substantive items on the Commission's agenda. That would send a positive message to the international community and would give reason for hope with respect to reinvigorating the multilateral disarmament system, which we have been trying to do for 10 years, but, unfortunately, without great success up to now.

The purpose of the Disarmament Commission is to engage in deliberations. It is our job to adopt recommendations or guidelines to be conveyed to the General Assembly. We are not negotiating international conventions or treaties. That is why it seems essential to us that all delegations here should show the necessary flexibility, making a good-faith commitment to negotiations to finalize clear guidelines on each of the two items, based on clear and easily identifiable principles.

Working Group I, mandated to consider recommendations in order to implement nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, has carried out a great deal of work, trying to canvass all existing positions on a subject that is complex and often controversial. We believe that it would be desirable to work on the basis of the views that were expressed, as reflected in the Chair's document, with a view to identifying clear general principles in the form of recommendations. In our view, such general principles could be based on the following ideas.

First, there is a need to reiterate the importance of multilateralism in disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. That requires a revitalization of the work of the Conference on Disarmament, the First Committee and the Disarmament Commission, as well as a revitalization of existing major international instruments.

In that respect, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains of fundamental importance to international peace and security. The balance set out by the NPT in terms of the rights and obligations of all must be safeguarded. The right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy; strict compliance by non-nuclear States with their obligations in the area of non-proliferation; and the need for the nuclear Powers to engage in negotiations in order to achieve general and complete disarmament are the fundamental principles on which the international legal regime was founded. That legal regime must be respected and strengthened through multilateral action, which is the only way of ensuring the achievement of tangible progress.

Secondly, in 1996 the international community took an important step by concluding the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Morocco, which is a party to that Treaty, deems it necessary once again to reiterate the fundamental importance of a complete ban on nuclear tests and of strict compliance with the Treaty's provisions. Nuclear tests promote not only the proliferation of nuclear weapons but also the increased sophistication and modernization of existing arsenals. It is therefore urgent to reiterate the importance of the full and effective entry into force of the CTBT.

Thirdly, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones must be promoted. That topic has been debated at length in the Commission in the past. Africa has shown the way in that respect by making the continent a nuclear-weapon-free zone through the Pelindaba Treaty. We hope that that example will be followed in other regions, in particular in those that are facing significant tensions, such as the Middle East.

Fourthly, the international legal regime in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation must be strengthened through the conclusion of a fissile material cut-off treaty.

Fifthly, the issue of nuclear terrorism requires urgent action. The threat of terrorist groups using nuclear devices or radioactive materials in a large urban centre is a frightening prospect. The international community must mobilize to avert such an occurrence, which, if it were to take place, would have tragic consequences not only in terms of loss of human life but also with respect to the environmental damage that could result from such a terrorist attack.

Morocco, mindful of what is at stake in that regard, hosted, on the basis of an initiative by the Group of Eight, an international meeting at Rabat on 30 and 31 October 2006. That meeting, which took place in the framework of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, yielded a statement of principles aimed mainly at developing partnership capacity to combat nuclear terrorism on a determined and systematic basis and to prevent the trafficking of nuclear materials and substances.

Sixthly and finally, the problem of the proliferation of delivery systems must be carefully considered. Morocco, which is currently chairing the group of States that have subscribed to The Hague Code of Conduct on the proliferation of ballistic missiles, recalls once again the need to promote all of the objectives contained in the Code and to combat the proliferation of delivery systems, which is a source of certain danger for international security.

With respect to specific confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons, as considered by Working Group II on the basis of the documents submitted by the Chair, several key principles should guide our thinking.

First, we must keep in mind the principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations, which must guide the actions of all Member States: the non-use of force in international relations, the peaceful settlement of disputes, and the respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States.

My country remains convinced that regional and international disputes must be resolved in a peaceful manner through dialogue and negotiations. Innovative and creative solutions must be promoted to resolve regional disputes.

Secondly, global military expenditures are reaching unprecedented levels. The major confidence-building measure in the area of conventional weapons must be a reduction in military expenditures and the promotion at the national level of policies aimed at

promoting human development and the achievement of socio-economic objectives.

Thirdly, conventional weapons have a destructive effect on many civilian populations, particularly in developing countries. A sustained international effort must be made to combat proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Appropriate follow-up of the 2001 Programme of Action, following the failure in 2006 of the Review Conference, must be undertaken. An international instrument on the marking and tracing of small arms and light weapons was concluded. We support the conclusion of an international instrument on brokering, and we would consider any measure that would strengthen the establishment of confidence-building measures in that area.

In the wake of the numerous failures we have witnessed in the past few years in the disarmament field at the United Nations, it is vital that the Disarmament Commission lead the way and that we make progress in achieving the objectives that we have set for ourselves. We no longer have the right to fail.

My delegation reiterates its hope that truly multilateral negotiations will take place during this session that will allow us to finalize the recommendations that the Commission will be transmitting to the General Assembly.

The complexity and sensitivity of the questions under review should not discourage us. We have an obligation to the international community to achieve results, and we remain optimistic with respect to the success of the work of the Commission.

**Mr. Dev Pant** (Nepal): Mr. Chairman, it is a pleasure to see you presiding over the 2007 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission. I am confident that, with your wisdom and consummate diplomatic skill, you will be able to steer the session to a successful conclusion. I also wish to felicitate the other members of the Bureau and the Chairmen of the Working Groups.

My delegation fully endorses the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). I would like also to thank the Secretary-General for his enlightening remarks at the opening of the session yesterday.

It is heartening that the Commission will continue to consider two very significant thematic issues during the current cycle, namely "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons", and "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons". My delegation believes that the Commission, as a deliberative forum, should strive to build on the spirit that led to consensus last year on the agenda items and utilize prudently the time allocated for the meetings in forging common ground, with a view to generating momentum towards achieving the shared goals of international peace and security through disarmament and non-proliferation.

The existence of nuclear weapons, including other weapons of mass destruction, remains a persistent threat to all humankind. The fact that the world has a stockpile of thousands of tons of highly enriched uranium and separated plutonium, which are enough to produce more than 100,000 nuclear weapons, is a stark reminder that international peace and security is in a state of absolute crisis.

Further, the series of setbacks that have faced the multilateral disarmament bodies — from the Conference on Disarmament to the Disarmament Commission to the 2006 Small Arms Review Conference — are ominous developments. The fact that the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was unable to adopt a final document and that the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document did not contain anything substantive on the subject of disarmament and non-proliferation speaks volumes about the state of affairs prevailing in the field of disarmament in general.

When the Non-Proliferation Treaty was signed in 1968, hopes were high that, while nuclear-weapon States would gradually cut down on their nuclear arsenals, non-nuclear-weapon States would desist from acquiring them. The 1995 Review and Extension Conference and the 2000 Review Conference provided an added sense of optimism in the context of promises made by the nuclear-weapon States, but unfortunately the commitments made at that time have hardly been translated into tangible actions. It is therefore in the interests of all that the current state of inertia come to an end.

As a State party to the NPT, Nepal remains fully convinced that the Treaty provides the fundamental basis for nuclear disarmament and serves as an

important instrument for curbing the vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. It has been our principled position that only the total elimination of nuclear weapons will provide an absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. As an interim measure, early initiatives are needed for the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances to non-nuclear weapon States.

While we believe that preserving the sanctity of that multilateral Treaty is a precondition for achieving the goal of disarmament and non-proliferation, nuclear-weapon States and those with nuclear capabilities should set an example by acceding to the Treaty.

We strongly believe that the proposed fissile material cut-off treaty must be concluded in earnest and that the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) must at the same time be strengthened so as to reinforce the existing verification mechanism for the non-proliferation regime. It has become all the more urgent to prevent terrorists from acquiring nuclear weapons.

The trend in the global trade in conventional weapons is equally alarming. As the largest consumers, developing countries, including many least developed countries, have been suffering as a result of the destabilizing accumulation of arms in their territories. That sobering situation needs to be addressed in dead earnest.

We believe that one modest way to mitigate the negative effects of conventional weapons is through the development of practical confidence-building measures. Such measures create a congenial atmosphere in which the stakeholders can enter into meaningful cooperation in carrying forward the objectives of disarmament at all levels. We share the view that dialogue, transparency and the voluntary sharing of information contribute to lessening the threats. Likewise, increased interaction as part of confidence-building measures promotes a sense of ownership, which enhances the chances for success of common initiatives. Lasting success, however, requires that the special needs of the participating countries be given due consideration.

In this context, I also wish to emphasize the importance of regional initiatives as an effective way to achieve the goals of disarmament through the consolidation of confidence-building measures at the regional level. In this context, the regional centres for peace and disarmament in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America deserve appreciation for the important work that they have accomplished in the field of disarmament in their respective regions. We are hoping that the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific will become fully operational from Kathmandu following its proposed relocation from New York, as mandated by General Assembly resolutions.

In conclusion, we commend the role played by the Commission in developing practical guidelines, as mandated by the General Assembly, to assist Member States in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. We hope that the current session will prove to be a milestone in setting the tone for the upcoming meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference, as well as for the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament — which is long overdue — to examine the whole question of disarmament.

**Mr. Aniokoye** (Nigeria): The Nigerian delegation joins previous speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission at its 2007 session. We also congratulate other members of the Bureau. We would like to assure you of the full support and cooperation of the Nigerian delegation. Furthermore, we express profound appreciation to the Chairmen of the two Working Groups for having provided us with the respective working documents on each of the two agenda items. We believe that both contain material sufficient to lead our discussions to the desired consensus.

We welcome the fact that the Secretary-General was present at the opening meeting of the substantive session and applaud his efforts to provide added momentum to the disarmament agenda.

My delegation associates itself fully with the statements made by the ambassadors of Indonesia and of the Sudan on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the African Group, respectively. I would like, however, to highlight a few additional areas of concern to my delegation.

We are gathered here at a time when the international community has witnessed a series of setbacks in various disarmament forums as a result of a lack of political will among some Member States to advance matters related to disarmament and

non-proliferation. Those failures should serve as a wake-up call to all of us. My delegation is of the firm belief that we must not continue to tread such a path but, rather, that we should all join together to reverse that trend by reaffirming our commitment to the principles and purposes of the Charter.

It is in this regard that my delegation attaches great importance to the current session of the Disarmament Commission, not only because this is the second year of the three-year cycle, in which we expect substantive discussions to commence, but also because there is an added expectation that, as this session interfaces with the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), its outcome will have an impact on the proceedings of that meeting.

On the first substantive agenda item, my delegation regards the Disarmament Commission as a unique, specialized and deliberative body within the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery, which has contributed to the emergence of global norms and benefited the international security environment. We therefore expect this session to build on the achievements of the past by embracing multilateralism in addressing the principles and objectives of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its ramifications.

My delegation strongly believes that nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to humanity. We therefore support the effective elimination of nuclear weapons through multilateral negotiations leading to the conclusion of a convention prohibiting the development, production, testing stockpiling, transfer, threat or use of nuclear weapons. To that end, the nuclear-weapon States must commit themselves to reversing the qualitative improvement, development, production and stockpiling of nuclear warheads and their means of delivery. We further support the establishment of a legally binding international instrument on security assurances.

The Nigerian delegation is also convinced that ownership of nuclear weapons confers a special, additional responsibility on those that possess them to build real confidence in the international community by committing themselves to a programme of nuclear disarmament.

On the issue of practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms, my delegation believes that such measures represent another means of strengthening international peace and security. Confidence-building creates an atmosphere conducive to negotiations on arms control and disarmament. When applied in a comprehensive manner, confidence-building measures can be conducive to achieving security based on cooperation and openness, thus contributing to the wider objective of the renunciation of the threat or use of force. To that end, implementation of the guidelines for appropriate types of confidence-building measures is significant, taking into account the prevailing political, military and other conditions.

The global arms trade has defied all efforts to address the negative consequences of conventional arms proliferation in crisis-ridden developing countries. It is therefore a matter of serious concern that developing countries account for 63.2 per cent of the value of international arms deliveries, estimated at over $1.1 trillion in 2006. We recall that the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament referred to heavy military expenditure as a colossal waste of resources. The Nigerian delegation calls for a drastic reduction in military expenditure so that resources saved can be channelled to efforts to fight poverty and improve other aspects of human well-being. It is a matter of regret that the 2006 estimate of global military expenditure rose astronomically to $1.1 trillion — 2.5 per cent of world gross domestic product.

My delegation is equally concerned that the illegal trade in small arms and light weapons and their easy accessibility to non-State actors continue to threaten peace, stability and security in, and the economies of, developing countries. It is in that regard that we have consistently advocated international measures to check the proliferation of such weapons at the national, regional and international levels. We believe that the Economic Community of West African States Moratorium on the importation and exportation of such arms, which was adopted as a Convention last June, could serve as a useful instrument in that direction.

My delegation is ready to work with other delegations to ensure that by the end of this session we will have contributed to the strengthening of international peace and security.

**Mr. Riedzal** (Malaysia): Mr. Chairman, my delegation congratulates you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission. My delegation associates itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

We all are familiar with the difficulties in realizing the disarmament agenda. Previous speakers have properly reiterated the lack of progress in other disarmament-related forums. Rather than discouraging us, this should only strengthen our resolve to reinvigorate the multilateral process through the United Nations in pursuit of the aims of complete and general disarmament, in which context nuclear disarmament constitutes a primary objective.

In a matter of weeks, when the Disarmament Commission concludes its session, a new cycle to prepare for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) will commence, beginning in Vienna.

My delegation hopes that the upcoming NPT Preparatory Committee will engage in substantive work. That is critical, considering the failure of the previous NPT Review Conference. Equally disturbing are reports of the development of a new, more sophisticated breed of nuclear weapons. That demonstrates not only the slow pace of progress but also the reversals that have taken place in the process of achieving nuclear disarmament, which does not bode well for the future of the NPT regime. This selective implementation of the NPT is appalling.

The lack of commitment on the part of nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their obligation to pursue and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects, under strict and effective international verification, is woeful and hardly consistent with the decision of non-nuclear-weapon States, which have voluntarily forsworn the nuclear-weapon option. In that regard, the non-nuclear-weapon States should be accorded multilateral, legally binding and unconditional assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapon States.

One of the best and most practical methods for dealing with the issue of negative security assurances (NSA) would be through a nuclear-weapon-free-zones treaty. In that regard, my delegation, while noting that security assurances have been provided by the nuclear-weapon States to all States parties to the treaties of Tlatelolco and of Rarotonga through their respective protocols, remains deeply concerned that not all nuclear-weapon States have signed or ratified the Protocols to the Treaty of Bangkok. My delegation also calls for all nuclear-weapon States to support the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

Another inconsistency is the growing emphasis on strengthening non-proliferation regimes, particularly through the Security Council, while progress in achieving nuclear disarmament remains elusive, which is disheartening. My delegation wishes to highlight that action by the Security Council should not undermine the United Nations Charter, existing multilateral treaties on weapons of mass destruction or the international organizations established in that regard, or the role of the General Assembly.

The only way to ensure the maintenance of international peace and security, including addressing the threat of nuclear weapons falling into the hands of terrorists, is through the complete elimination of such weapons. In that regard, my delegation, as it did recently in the Conference on Disarmament, underlines the need for the Conference to commence, in the near future, multilateral negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention or instrument.

The renowned Blix Commission on weapons of mass destruction in its report last year concluded that a nuclear disarmament treaty was achievable and could be reached through careful, sensible and practical measures. Benchmarks should be set, definitions agreed, timetables drawn up and agreed upon, and transparency requirements agreed. Disarmament work should be set in motion. My delegation strongly agrees with the Blix Commission that it is time to move forward from the current stalemate and revive discussions and work on nuclear disarmament.

While the primary role of the Disarmament Commission is to deliberate on specific disarmament issues and not to deliberate on treaties, any consensus reached at a Disarmament Commission session could send a positive signal to other bodies and meetings such as the Conference on Disarmament and the NPT Preparatory Committee, possibly contributing to breaking the impasse obstructing the work of those disarmament machineries.

The danger posed by conventional weapons, particularly in conflict situations, is also of concern to my delegation. The number of deaths and injuries inflicted by conventional weapons is staggering, qualifying them as de facto weapons of mass destruction.

In that regard, confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons which are voluntarily implemented could contribute to strengthening international and regional peace and security. In line with this, Malaysia completed the destruction of its stockpile of anti-personnel landmines on 23 January 2001 and accordingly has fulfilled its obligations under article 4 of the Ottawa Convention.

My delegation considers the working paper circulated by the Chairman of Working Group II as a good basis for our discussion.

**Mr. Mahiga** (United Republic of Tanzania): The United Republic of Tanzania wishes to congratulate you, Ambassador Rosselli, and, through you, the other members of the Bureau, on your election to chair this important session of the Disarmament Commission. We have no doubt that under your wise guidance and leadership, the Commission this year will have fruitful discussions and be able to chart some practical recommendations on how conventional nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation can together be achieved progressively, today and in future, in this globalized world.

Allow me to thank your predecessor, Ambassador Joon Oh of the Republic of Korea, for his remarkable contributions to that end. We wish also to express our profound appreciation to the Secretary-General for his enlightening keynote address yesterday.

Furthermore, we would like to associate ourselves with the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Group statements, which were delivered by the representatives of Indonesia and of the Sudan, respectively.

My delegation has noted that, in general, there is a prevailing political will and commitment from Member States to learn from the experience gained so far and from the setbacks encountered to date by the Commission, in order to move the process forward despite the failures of the two Review Conferences — one on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in 2005 and the other on small arms, in 2006.

There is also a strong recognition by members of the continuing vital role of the Commission as a viable multilateral deliberating body dealing with disarmament and non-proliferation problems. This is a great source of encouragement and cause for further dedication to the process. A candid assessment of the root causes of the setbacks largely points, on one hand, to the political and security-related sensitivity and complexity of the subject matter in question and, on the other hand, to the inherent weaknesses deeply embedded in the multilateral arms control process.

The difficulties encountered should not be an excuse for complacency but should be seen as challenges to be addressed. Achieving full and complete disarmament should remain our determined goal, major focus and ultimate achievement. In fact, disarmament and non-proliferation are moral and ethical requirements, to be underpinned by legal obligations, if we are to ensure the survival of the human species and the future of planet Earth, with its already fragile ecology. We strongly believe that it is not only the threat of accidental nuclear detonation but also the incomprehensible logic of the nuclear arms race and nuclear proliferation that will determine the fate of humankind. We have a chance to arrest the progression of that logic by rededicating ourselves to the mission and work of this Commission.

We agree with previous speakers who have insisted that although all of us bear responsibility for, and have an important role to play towards, the implementation of the two objectives of advancing disarmament and non-proliferation, the primary responsibility for putting in place an effective, non-discriminatory control regime that goes hand in hand with other universally agreed global values, in the final analysis, lies with the nuclear States and those aspiring to join the nuclear arms club.

In this context, we should recall that the NPT came about after difficult bargaining and compromise between nuclear States and non-nuclear States, with the condition that the former agreed to negotiate the elimination of their weapons and share technology for peaceful purposes in return. It would appear that unless and until nuclear States demonstrate their readiness to allow transparent verification, compliance and enforcement measures, the effectiveness of the NPT

will remain doubtful and, in the long run, will frustrate the work and future achievements of the Commission.

It is therefore our appeal that the ongoing gradual erosion of general confidence in various existing treaty regimes should be arrested and that every effort be urgently taken to improve the regimes and enhance political commitment. The increasing demand for more rigorous regimes is dictated by changing security circumstances and evolving threats which demand more rigorous adherence to such multilateral agreements. The work of the Commission is therefore more necessary today than ever before, given the increasing terrorist threats emanating from some radical non-State actors.

Regarding the conventional aspect of the problem, the Great Lakes region of Africa, to which my country belongs, concluded last December a regional Pact on Peace, Security and Development. In the Pact, the non-proliferation of small arms and light weapons is a major component. Tanzania upholds the NPT and its 13 practical steps. It is a party to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and a signatory to an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Additional Protocol. Regrettably, however, until now, the CTBT still lacks sufficient ratifications to allow it to become fully operational. We appeal to those Members that have not yet signed or ratified it to do so. Their signatures are long overdue. We believe that differences among Member States regarding interpretation are not beyond compromise, and that a consensus can be reached. Here, again, we urge nuclear Powers to exercise leadership while we collectively muster the necessary political will and occupy the moral high ground.

Regional nuclear-free zone agreements such as the Pelindaba Treaty, Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, the Treaty of Tlatelolco in Latin America and the Rarotonga Treaty in the South Pacific play a crucial role in line with the Commission's consensus conclusion of 1999 on guidelines for establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones and for encouraging conventional arms control.

We consider these treaties to be important measures towards the strengthening of global non-proliferation efforts and wish to commend the five Central Asian countries for signing the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone at Semipalatinsk on 8 September 2006.

In the context of conventional arms, we share the view that, on the disarmament agenda, greater emphasis should be put on the illicit arms trade and its devastating human security consequences, especially in Africa, where small arms and light weapons are in effect weapons of mass destruction. Their ease of use and the ease with which they can spread exacerbate insurgencies, civil conflicts and ethnic and regional conflicts. The adoption in 2001 of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects was very welcome and highly appreciated. The same applies to the United Nations Firearms Protocol to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which entered into force in 2005.

Therefore, in conclusion, my delegation calls for further political commitment from all members and for the Commission's improvement of all regimes in place, including a thorough follow-up conference to the Programme of Action, as a significant step to ensure full implementation of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regimes. We are ready to contribute, to support you, Mr. Chairman, and to cooperate with other members in order to ensure the success of the third year of the cycle of the Disarmament Commission's deliberations in 2008.

**Mr. Mubarak** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): Let me first of all congratulate you, Sir, upon your election to chair the Disarmament Commission for 2007. I would also like to congratulate the other members of the Bureau and the Chairs of the two Working Groups. My delegation is convinced that your experience and skills will produce the positive results that we hope for at this session.

My delegation fully supports the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the States Members of the Non-Aligned Movement and the statement made by the representative of the Sudan on behalf of the African Group.

My delegation would briefly like to stress a few points on the two substantive items on our agenda.

There is still an urgent need to ensure balance and to avoid selectivity in the implementation of the provisions of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), so as to break the impasse in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

The current impasse in the disarmament machinery cannot be explained by anything related to its effectiveness, or lack thereof. It can only be explained by the lack of political will to make progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. My country demonstrated this when on 19 December 2003 we proclaimed our historic choice to eliminate all equipment and programmes that could result in the production of internationally prohibited weapons. This initiative, which brought us praise and congratulations from all members of the international community, was based on our conviction that the arms race could not serve our security or regional security and contradicted our desire to see the world enjoy peace and security.

My country thought that its initiative would serve as a catalyst to spur other countries to follow our example, beginning with the Middle East and without exception. We also believed that our decision would serve our national security only if a number of major concerns were addressed. On a number of occasions the international community has stated those concerns in resolutions and instruments that talk about the need for settling these issues.

Among those concerns, I would like to note, first, the need for non-selective and comprehensive implementation of the provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), in particular those of article VI as they relate to nuclear disarmament and of article IV as they relate to facilitating — not restricting — the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. We also stress the need for respect for the principles set out in the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly (resolution S-10/2), the outcome of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and the outcome of the 2000 Review Conference, with particular reference to the 13 practical steps for systematic and progressive efforts to implement article VI of the Treaty. Here, my delegation stresses that any progress towards nuclear disarmament will help enhance international security through non-proliferation.

The second concern relates to the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all parts of the world. I would draw attention to the fact that, despite all the efforts that the international community has made to transform the Middle East into a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, Israel's possession of military nuclear reactors and hundreds of nuclear warheads poses a grave threat not only to regional but also to international peace and security. Needless to say, Israel is the only country in the Middle East that continues to refuse to join the NPT, even though its accession would strengthen the Treaty's universality and defuse the tense situation in the region.

The third relates to the need to put in place the necessary guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States through an unconditional, legally binding international instrument that would ease the concerns raised by the failure of nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their commitments with respect to the total elimination of these weapons.

Fourthly, we must work towards the speedy entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) through signing and ratification by countries that have not yet done so, especially those listed in annex 2 of the Treaty. In our view, those countries should act as quickly as possible, because the CTBT, if implemented, would be a step forward in the field of nuclear non-proliferation.

Turning to the agenda item entitled "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons", my delegation stresses the importance of adopting effective measures that would help strengthen international peace and security while respecting the principles of the right of States to possess the weapons they need for self-defence, State sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. Such measures must also respect the specific characteristics and the particular security and defence requirements of each region.

With respect to the issue of transparency and the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, my delegation remains convinced that the Register's methodology continues to be selective and lacking in balance, because it does not cover all types of weapons, including some that are weapons of mass destruction, or all aspects of a nation's capacity to produce, possess and stockpile arms.

My delegation wishes in conclusion to reaffirm its commitment to the objectives of the Disarmament Commission. We hope to see constructive participation in this substantive session so that members can reach consensus and formulate serious, concrete recommendations on the two substantive items on our agenda. We assure you, Mr. Chairman, of our entire

readiness to cooperate with a view to attaining the goals we have identified for the session.

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): I call now on those representatives who wish to make statements in exercise of the right of reply.

**Mr. Bravaco** (United States of America): I would like to address Iran's intentionally misleading and blatantly false statements regarding the strong United States record of compliance with its disarmament obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The various and extensive steps taken by the United States in these regards are matters of public record, but they are nonetheless worth summarizing here.

Since the end of the cold war, the United States has made extraordinary progress in reducing the size of its once vast nuclear weapons stockpile. It has dismantled more than 13,000 nuclear weapons since 1988, dismantled more than 3,000 non-strategic nuclear weapons, reduced non-strategic weapons deployed in support of NATO in Europe by 90 per cent, removed all non-strategic nuclear weapons from surface ships and naval aircraft, and withdrawn from Europe and retired all nuclear artillery shells, Lance missile warheads and naval nuclear depth bombs. The United States is now in the process of drawing down its operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads to between 1,700 and 2,200 by the year 2012.

In parallel with reductions in warhead numbers, the United States has been reducing its nuclear delivery systems. Since the cold war's end, the United States has cancelled the modern, highly sophisticated Midgetman missile, halted production of other major weapons systems, such as the B-2 stealth bomber, taken out of nuclear weapon service four Ohio-class nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines and removed the B-1 Lancer bomber from strategic service. To date, in fact, the United States has eliminated more than 1,000 strategic missiles and bombers and 450 silos for intercontinental ballistic missiles.

These reductions have been a continuing priority for the current Bush Administration. The final MX Peacekeeper missile, the last of 50, was deactivated in September 2005, and the United States recently announced that it would eliminate about 400 advanced cruise missiles currently deployed with the B-52 bomber fleet.

The United States has not enriched uranium for nuclear weapons purposes since 1964 and has produced no plutonium for nuclear weapons since 1988. Since 1992, moreover, it has scrupulously observed a declared moratorium on nuclear testing and hopes to develop its capabilities to the point where it can be assured that such testing will not be needed. The United States is also a staunch advocate of a treaty to ban any further production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive purposes. Indeed, in May 2006, the United States became the first and, so far, the only nation to introduce a draft fissile material cut-off treaty at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

The United States is also moving to reduce its reliance upon nuclear weapons in its military doctrine. As announced in the Nuclear Posture Review of 2001, the United States is moving away from the cold war nuclear triad as the cornerstone of its strategic posture. Pursuant to this plan, strategic deterrence no longer relies exclusively upon nuclear weapons. Instead, to maintain an enhanced deterrence, the United States relies upon a combination of nuclear and non-nuclear offensive strike capabilities, defences, including ballistic missile defences, and a robust and responsive defence industrial infrastructure.

The United States and Russia have also taken many bilateral steps that support achieving the goals of the preamble and article VI of the NPT, by helping Russia move away from its cold war nuclear posture. Agreements between the United States and Russia facilitate the shutdown of Russia's last three plutonium production reactors by replacing them with fossil fuel plants. Moreover, the United States is provided funding to redirect the efforts of over 60,000 former Soviet weapons scientists to peaceful commercial work. The United States has also been helping Russia to reduce the size of and increase security within its nuclear weapons complex.

The United States and Russia are currently engaged in a broad-ranging strategic security dialogue designed, among other things, to work out the nature of their strategic relationship after the expiration of the first Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I) in 2009. This dialogue began in September 2006 between former senior officials in the United States and the Russian Federation.

I have highlighted some of the substantial United States disarmament efforts over the past several decades. We will circulate a more complete presentation of United States progress in due course. We are proud of our record on compliance and are eager to discuss it and engage in an honest dialogue. However, for that dialogue to be fruitful, Member States must not engage in intentional efforts to distort the facts.

I will not dignify the rest of the comments and assertions Iran has made other than to reject them.

**Mr. Sin Song Chol** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): My delegation would like to say a few words on the remarks made by the Australian delegation with regard to our nuclear test and the Six-Party Talks for the better comprehension of all the delegations gathered in this room.

The nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula is a direct product of the hostile policy of the United States towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Bush Administration has designated the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a part of the "axis of evil" and as an "outpost of tyranny", and has threatened a pre-emptive nuclear strike. In these compelling circumstances, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had no choice but to make nuclear weapons to counter the constant threat of nuclear attack by the United States. Last October, it successfully carried out nuclear tests. This is a reasonable exercise of the sovereign right to defend our territory, population and social system from foreign attack and invasion.

The resolution of the nuclear issue depends entirely on the attitude of the United States. The agreement of 13 February was possible only because the United States promised to lift financial sanctions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea within 30 days. However, the money has not reached our hands, although the United States declared that it had lifted the sanctions.

It is not simply a question of money; it is, rather, a question of credibility. Having cited these parts of the official statement delivered by our Permanent Representative this morning, we would like to conclude with the following remarks. The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is of the view that if Australia sincerely wishes the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, it should, before anything else, exercise its influence over the United States, which is its ally, to fully and faithfully implement its obligations under the agreed principle of action for action.

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): Having come to the end of our speaker's list, we have completed the general exchange of views.

The Working Groups will begin their deliberations tomorrow morning. I would like to wish all members every success in their work, under the guidance of my colleagues, the Chairmen of the Groups.

*The meeting rose at 4:30 p.m.*

United Nations A/CN.10/PV.281

# General Assembly

*Official Records*

Disarmament Commission

**281** st meeting

Friday, 27 April 2007, 10 a.m.

New York

*Chairperson*: Mr. Rosselli ..... (Uruguay)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.*

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): After three weeks of deliberations on the substantive agenda items by the two Working Groups, the Commission is now approaching the final stage of its work for the present session. Therefore, we must consider and adopt the reports of the subsidiary bodies and the Commission's draft report to the General Assembly. As planned, this meeting of the Committee of the Whole will be devoted to general consideration of the reports of the Working Groups, as contained in documents A/CN.10/2007/CRP.3 and CRP.4, and the draft report of the Commission, in document A/CN.10/2007/CRP.2, which have been distributed to delegations.

We shall first take up the reports of the Working Groups, as contained in documents A/CN.10/2007/CRP.3 and CRP.4. We shall consider them individually, seeking members' comments. Later, at the plenary meeting, the reports will be formally introduced by the Chairmen of the respective Working Groups.

The Committee of the Whole will now take up the draft reports of the Working Groups. Are there any comments with regard to document CRP.3, which contains the draft report of Working Group I?

I see that no delegation wishes to comment on draft report CRP.3. We shall therefore now turn to document CRP.4, which contains the draft report of Working Group II. Does any delegation wish to comment on that draft report?

**Mr. Rodríguez Zahar** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): With regard to CRP.4, the secretariat has already been notified that there is a mistake in the second line of paragraph 2. It should read as "with the consent", instead of "with the consensus".

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): We shall now consider the draft report of the Disarmament Commission, which is contained in document A/CN.10/2007/CRP.2.

Does any delegation wish to take the floor to comment on the draft report? Do delegations perhaps need more time to consider it?

**Mr. Pardeshi** (India): I would like to draw the Chairperson's attention to CRP.3, which contains the draft report of Working Group I.

If I recall correctly, we did not agree to insert the phrase "The Working Group noted" in paragraph 12. If I recall correctly, the paragraph began with "It is the Chairman's view that his working paper will be a basis". I stand to be corrected by delegations and the secretariat as to whether we agreed on that formulation.

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): I have consulted briefly with the secretariat and the Chair of the Working Group. They have both told me that the Group did in fact agree on the text as it appears in CRP.3. That is the information available to me. The representative of India appears not to agree.

**Mr. Pardeshi** (India): I apologize for taking the floor again. My delegation does not share that understanding. I would ask whether the Chair of

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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Working Group I would like to clarify this matter. We are prepared to listen to him. But that is not the understanding I had that day.

**The Chairperson** (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegations of Indonesia and Italy have asked for the floor. If those delegations do not object, I would first like to ask whether the Chair of Working Group I would like to make any clarifications.

**Mr. Zinsou** (Benin) (*spoke in French*): I am deeply concerned about this situation, and I have taken note of it.

I would like to recall that the wording that has been retained was kept as it was because the same delegation that has taken the floor to challenge the paragraph as it is now worded did not want it included in the text in the way that delegation has phrased it today. That delegation said that the report was not prepared in order to record the views of the Chair, but to convey the views of the Group. That was the reason that the delegation of Mexico proposed that we say "The Working Group noted the Chairman's view". I shall therefore not withdraw anything from the text of the draft report as it has been presented to the Commission.

**The Chairperson** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Chair of the Working Group for that clarification.

**Mr. Ruddyard** (Indonesia): Speaking on behalf of my delegation with regard to the issue that has just been raised by our colleague from India, if my recollection is correct, at our last meeting, when we discussed the draft report of Working Group I, there was no agreement on "the Group noted". Indeed, since the time I raised the issue of the insertion of the Chairman's views into the Working Group report — as opposed to a report of the Chairman — we have achieved no agreement on the insertion of the words "the Working Group noted". That is my recollection of what took place during our discussion.

**Mr. Cuculi** (Italy): Unfortunately, the recollection of my delegation is different from that of our colleagues from India and Indonesia. I have the clear memory that there was a long discussion. The first paragraph proposed by the Chair of Working Group I, which stated, "it is the view of the Chair", was not acceptable to some delegations because, as the Chair of Working Group I has just said, it was maintained that this report is a report of the Group and should not state, as such, the views of a single officer, no matter how important that officer may be as Chair of Working Group I. So, it was said that a possible way out would be for the Group to "take note" of the views of the Chair of Working Group I as a statement of fact. We also had an extensive discussion on that point. When the gavel went down on this paragraph, it was the clear understanding of my delegation that the possible compromise could have been the language as it stands now.

Having said that, of course, my delegation went on record yesterday as saying that in a factual report there was full room for expressing the views of a limited number of delegations which may not have been the views of all delegations. I refer in particular to paragraph 10, as drafted. And my delegation went on the record, saying that by the same token it was also the right of the Chair of Working Group I to express his views. That was why my delegation supported, at the beginning, the language as initially proposed by the Chair of Working Group I. But, after the long discussion we had, I went out of the room under the clear impression that the possible compromise was the current language. Again, I may have misunderstood what happened yesterday, but that was the clear sense my delegation got from yesterday's long debate.

**Mr. Rodríguez Zahar** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation fully agrees with what the representative of Italy just said and, indeed, with what the Chairman of Working Group I said. For its part, my delegation made this proposal as a compromise solution. It was our understanding that it had been accepted.

**Mr. Shamaa** (Egypt): My delegation's recollection of the last meeting of Working Group I, which was held on Wednesday morning, is that there was an extensive discussion on paragraph 12 of the Working Group report, as it appears in document A/CN.10/2007/CRP.2/Rev.1. Various proposals were made around that paragraph, and at the end of the day there was no consensus on any of them. Finally, according to our recollection — oral and written — the paragraph as it stands in CRP.2/Rev.1, reflecting the Chairman's view, is the text that was agreed upon. That is our recollection on that paragraph.

**The Chairman**: Not having been involved in the process, I myself have no recollection. We have a situation in which I would wish to inquire of the

delegations of India and Indonesia, which have a different recollection, whether they have a problem with the current formulation. If that is the case — apart from the fact that I do not understand how it was agreed — we will have to find a solution. I do not intend to restart the whole discussion, but I will observe that there were apparently two choices: one that said, "it is the Chairman's view", et cetera, and one that said, "the Working Group noted". Apparently there was a lengthy debate on this, and I would seek advice from delegations as to the appropriate formulation they would wish to see.

**Mr. Pardeshi** (India): I would like to draw attention to documents A/CN.10/2007/CRP.2 and CRP.3 and to point out how careless the approach has been. The cited paragraph in CRP.2 is different from the paragraph that appears in CRP.3. My point is that this was guided by certain motivations. For example, let us read from CRP.3 — and I would request delegations to keep CRP.2 open before them as well: paragraph 12 begins "The Working Group", while in the version in CRP.2 begins "Working Group I". Later the paragraph says the "working paper will", but the citation — included in CRP.3 — is missing in CRP.2. The version in CRP.2 then reads "will provide a basis", while in CRP.3 it says "will be a basis".

I am drawing the Commission's attention to the fact that there have been serious errors in the formulation of this paragraph. I think the two different versions of the same paragraph appearing in CRP.3 and CRP.2 suggest that there have been some motivated alterations.

**Mr. Cuculi** (Italy): I apologize for asking for the floor once again. I wish to address two different issues. The first relates to paragraph 12 as it appears in document A/CN.10/2007/CRP.3 vis-à-vis as it was originally, in CRP.2/Rev.1. If delegations are not comfortable with the wording used in CRP.3 as it stands now, my delegation, as it said on Wednesday, would be more than willing to go back to the original formulation of paragraph 12: "it is the Chairman's view that his working paper" and so forth. That would only confirm the feeling of many delegations that we could indeed have been spared the extensive debate we had yesterday on this point — and I hope that such a debate will be avoided today. Again, my delegation has no problem with going back to the old paragraph 12, as it was initially presented by the Chair of Working Group I.

Concerning the discrepancies between paragraph 12 of CRP.2, which is the draft report of the Disarmament Commission, and CRP.3 as it currently stands, there are indeed some differences of which we have become aware thanks to the intervention of my Indian colleague. I would not go that far, but it is my personal feeling that the changes were deliberately made, so we all know the kind of pressure under which the Secretariat and subsidiary staff work. So I think that it could be possible to reconcile the two texts with the version that was discussed yesterday, with the clarification as to whether it is the group that takes note of the Chair's view or whether it is the Chair's view. But I would be reluctant to engage in a long discussion at this point.

**The Chairman**: Before I call on other representatives who wish to speak, I would wish to seek the guidance, particularly of the representative of India.

I am reading paragraph 12 of CRP.3, which says: "The Working Group noted the Chairman's view in his working paper" and that it "will be a basis for further deliberations for the formulation of consensus recommendations at the conclusion of the Commission's three-year examination of agenda item 4 at its substantive session in 2008".

I read paragraph 12 on page 8 of CRP.2. It is almost identical, with an editorial change to the effect that "Working Group I noted", which is basically the same thing as saying "The Working Group" because it is reporting here. And there is a change in from CRP. 3, where it says "agenda item 4 at its substantive session in 2008", from CRP.2, which says "at its 2008 substantive session". That is not quoting; it is reporting. It is not a quote; it is reported language.

I am therefore personally puzzled because I do not notice any other difference, so I would beg the indulgence of the representative of India to guide me.

**Mr. Pardeshi** (India): As I understand, this should be the exact quotation, because the preface says that "the report of Working Group I reads as follows". In other bodies or disarmament forums, when a committee's report is reproduced in the report of a commission or the higher body, it has to be reproduced verbatim. That is the understanding of my delegation.

My question is: If it does not alter the substance, why was it done? That means that there has been some

serious error in the methods of work. That validates my point that that day there was no agreement on the insertion of the words "The Working Group noted". The point I am making by bringing up two version of the same paragraph is to validate my argument that this insertion has been done by the Chairman himself and that there was no agreement.

As explained by the delegation of Egypt, there were many formulations that day, but for the sake of flexibility, we expressed the readiness to endorse the formulation presented by the Chairman. This was not the formulation presented by the Chairman. This is the point my delegation is making. My delegation is prepared to go by the gentleman's agreement that we had on Wednesday. We had no difficulty with that, but we certainly have a difficulty in inserting things which were not agreed.

I hope I have clarified the position of my delegation and that this will be taken into account, as well as my request to the Chairman and the secretariat to provide explanations as to why it has been done.

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): The representative of India has an understanding of what has occurred that is not necessarily shared by other delegations.

**Mr. Brasack** (Germany): Very briefly, it is obvious that there are at least two different recollections, one shared by Italy and Mexico, and the other by India, Indonesia and, if I understood correctly, Egypt.

I do not want to go into the issue of the differing recollections, but I think that if a solution is found, we should not tamper with, so to speak, or rearrange or redraft CRP.3. I think that should be untouched, in particular also in the light of the fact that the Chairman of that Working Group reconfirmed that view at this meeting. I also believe that, if there is a problem with the word "provide" in paragraph 12 of CRP.2, we could certainly take the wording from paragraph 12 of CRP.3, which says the paper will be "basis". We could just delete the word "provide" and then the text would be similar, but if we change things, CRP.2 is still a draft text and we therefore have the possibility to synchronize it.

But in my view, we should leave CRP.3. It was adopted and confirmed by the Chairman of that Working Group, and some delegations hold the view that this was a text that was agreed on. It was a very difficult negotiation on that item, so we should try not to reopen it.

**Mr. Benítez Versón** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I apologize for having arrived late to the meeting. I also wish to express our pleasure at seeing you, Sir, presiding over this meeting.

My delegation is extremely surprised by the fact that we now have before us a document in CRP.3 that, in paragraph 12, differs from the language that we agreed on in the Working Group. That is of special concern when we consider the fact that paragraph 12 was agreed following a very intensive and extensive process of negotiation. I wish to make my delegation's position quite clear. Cuba is not prepared to accept paragraph 12 as it appears in CRP.3, since that was not the paragraph that we negotiated and agreed on in the Working Group.

I also have a comment to make with regard to paragraph 8 of CRP.3. During the discussions in the Working Group, my delegation made a proposal to amend paragraph 8. The proposed amendment was accepted by the Group, but the language that now appears in CRP.3 does not reflect what we agreed in the Working Group. Specifically, in the Working Group my delegation proposed the following wording:

(*spoke in English*)

> "At the 9th and 10th meetings of the Working Group on 23 and 24 April, preliminary discussions took place on specific elements contained in the different papers submitted by the Chairman, as well as other papers submitted by delegations and groups of delegations."

(*spoke in Spanish*)

I wish to stress that that was Cuba's proposed text, but it is not the language that appears in paragraph 8. My delegation therefore believes that paragraph 8 should reflect the language that was adopted, and not a different draft.

**Mr. Hashmi** (Pakistan): I have only a brief comment. I promise you, Mr. Chairman, that I will not enter into procedural discussions. I just have a few thoughts to share with the Commission.

My delegation recognizes the need for the Commission and its members to be precise and to ensure that everything is reflected in the way it was

agreed; that is a very fundamental point. But I think that precision is not the only objective that we in the Commission are seeking. We had hoped, as we indicated, that all delegations would try to focus on substance, not on semantics. I wish we had utilized the time we spent on procedural discussions to address the substance of the issues with which we were faced. But, of course, we chose only to have discussions; we did not deliberate. That is what the Commission is supposed to do, and it just goes to show how deep the divisions are among Member States concerning both procedures and methodology, and, of course, on the substance.

I will conclude by saying that we hope that the Commission does not revisit the debate in which it has been engaged since 2006, and we very much hope that we will start focusing on our substantive work, which is to deliberate on substance, not focus on semantics.

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): Let us see if we can clear up the situation.

Let us start with paragraph 12 of CRP.3, which is an exact reflection of the one contained in CRP.2. The problem with CRP.2, as stated by the representative of India, is that its text is not identical in that respect. So let us determine which wording should be used in paragraph 12 of CRP.3.

**Mr. Pardeshi** (India): I am sorry to take the floor once again. The first point is that paragraph 12, as reflected in CRP.3, is not the paragraph as it was agreed. The secondary question relates to its synchronization; that is the second point. The point is, we should agree first on CRP.3 and then on the exact reproduction of that language in CRP.2. The problem is that paragraph 12 is not the agreed text.

**The Chairman**: I wanted to address exactly that, and that is what I thought I said in Spanish. What I meant was that the question of CRP.2 is only a reflection of the disagreement on CRP.3. What I wished to do was to address paragraph 12 of CRP.3. It seems to me that there are two options here. Option number one is to retain the formulation as is, but certain delegations object to that. Option number two is to revisit the text and draft something different, which, apparently, could involve simply going back to the text that read "it is the Chairman's view", and so on.

My question is — apart from recollections and procedures and so on — is the membership satisfied with a paragraph 12 that would read: "It is the Chairman's view that his working paper will be a basis" and so on, as contained in CRP.3? If that is the case, we have solved the problem.

**Mr. Shamaa** (Egypt): Paragraph 12 as it appears in CRP.3 is not the paragraph that was agreed at the last meeting of the Working Group. But I wish to raise another point, the one raised by the representative of Cuba with regard to paragraph 8. I just want to add something; I am not going to enter into a discussion on that issue. But I think that it is essential to take a decision and have an exact reflection of what has been agreed. What happened with respect to paragraph 8 requires that we go thoroughly through the text of the draft report.

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to come back to the issue of paragraph 12. After that we can address the issue of paragraph 8.

Concerning paragraph 12, I understand that there would be consensus in the Room for paragraph 12 to read: "It is the Chairman's view that his working paper" and so on, as the paragraph reads in CRP.3. If that is the case, paragraph 12 therefore will read, in its entirety:

> "It is the Chairman's view that his working paper (A/CN.10/2007/WG.I/WP.4) will be a basis for further deliberations for the formulation of consensus recommendations at the conclusion of the Commission's three-year examination of agenda item 4 at its substantive session in 2008."

I see no disagreement. That is solved.

Turning to the second issue, paragraph 12, page 8, of CRP.2 will repeat exactly — verbatim — what has been agreed with respect to paragraph 12. The secretariat will therefore reissue this, correcting the formulation. In that context, I thank the representative of India, and I thank all representatives for their understanding and for having resolved that issue.

The representative of Cuba raised another problem pertaining to paragraph 8. But I do not want to go here into an exercise of recollection. We have an issue: one representative says that he cannot live with the paragraph as is, so I will have to seek the views of the membership as to whether the formulation of paragraph 8 read out by the Cuban representative is satisfactory. If I am not mistaken, that paragraph,

according to the proposal of the representative of Cuba, should read:

> "At the 9th and 10th meetings of the Working Group, on 23 and 24 April, preliminary discussions took place on specific elements contained in the different papers submitted by the Chairman as well as on other papers submitted by delegations and groups of delegations."

Does the membership agree to that formulation?

I see no objection.

We have thus agreed on that paragraph. Therefore the issues related to paragraphs 8 and 12 have been resolved, and I am grateful to the membership for their cooperation.

Are there are comments on document CRP.3?

As no delegation has requested the floor, it is my understanding that the Committee of the Whole is satisfied with document CRP.3. We have had no comments on CRP.4 and we have had no comments on CRP.2, apart from the matter raised by the delegate of India. We will make sure that whatever correlated changes may be needed will be done. The Secretary tells me that the text of paragraph 8 in CRP.2 will also be taken verbatim from CRP.3.

I will then take it that the Committee of the Whole has considered and adopted these documents, I mean, we will adopt them at the plenary, which will come right after us.

We have finalized the consideration of the documents. The delegations of Mexico and of Saudi Arabia have requested the floor.

**Mr. Rodríguez Zahar** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to state that it does not accept what occurred after Mexico's statement in the final meeting of Working Group II last Wednesday, 25 April. My delegation, in full exercise of its rights that day, proposed an amendment to paragraph 2 of the report of the Working Group. The amendment dealt with issues related to application of the rules of procedure, and that situation led to consultation with the Department of Legal Affairs. However, one specific delegation attempted to disqualify Mexico's proposal, calling it "not serious" and "indecent" — I repeat, "not serious" and "indecent".

My delegation would like to express its most vigorous rejection of the use of this type of language, which Mexico feels is totally unacceptable. We believe that the exchange of opinions and the presentation of proposals within the Organization should never lose the fair and respectful character that has always typified such exchange.

**Mr. Al-Sudairy** (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): Since this is the first time that the delegation of my country is speaking, I am pleased to congratulate you, Sir, on your chairmanship of this important meeting, which demonstrates your standing and that of your country. We also appreciate and commend the efforts of the Office of Disarmament Affairs, in preparing for the work of this meeting. We reviewed with interest the unofficial document which you have presented to this meeting and the amendments made to it, which include many new positive points.

During the meeting held in Geneva, the Kingdom submitted a report, which was issued as an official United Nations document, concerning particular measures to support the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, in response to Part I of the Final Document of the sixth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In this context, my Government continues to affirm the concerns set out in that report, most notably the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. This issue has been promoted by the General Assembly since 1974 and has been adopted in consensus resolutions since 1980.

Security and stability in any region cannot be achieved through the possession of weapons of mass destruction, but can be achieved through ongoing cooperation among States and by seeking to achieve development and progress and avoiding the race for the possession of these terrible weapons. Therefore, Israel's possession of nuclear weapons is a major obstacle to the achievement of security and stability in the region.

Consequently, all of Israel's justifications for possessing and developing weapons of mass destruction, nuclear weapons in particular, clearly contradict all its claims regarding its desire for peace with the peoples and States of the region. Real peace must be built on trust and on demonstrating good intentions among the States and peoples of the region

and on ending oppression, occupation and the perpetration of heinous crimes. It is not built on possession of nuclear weapons or the threat of using them and imposing the policy of fait accompli and hegemony that will not only be a source of worry and threat for the people of the region but will also threaten international peace and security.

In this regard also, my country has repeatedly demonstrated its readiness to respond quickly to all calls for international peace and stability, as indicated in the report it submitted to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), on the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The report was prepared in accordance with paragraph 4 of that resolution and was issued in an official document.

Also in this context, the permanent representative of Saudi Arabia to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) sent a letter to the Director General of the IAEA with a letter from the Government of the Kingdom authorizing him to sign the safeguards agreement and the small quantities protocol. The signing in fact took place. It is also worth mentioning that the Kingdom last year signed International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and it is one of the States targeted by terrorism.

My country's Government is following developments that resulted from the adoption of resolutions 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007) regarding Iran's nuclear programme, which are still unresolved. This is a cause for concern. On the other hand, it is important to encourage the Iranian side to continue its cooperation with the IAEA in the context of those resolutions.

My country's Government hopes that Iran will continue its positive cooperation and to move forward in this direction, which would constitute a step in the right direction for achieving security and stability in the Gulf region, which is part of the system of international security and stability. We should not deny the right of States to the peaceful use of nuclear energy in accordance with the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

On a similar issue, regarding North Korea's nuclear capabilities, my country's Government welcomes the positive results achieved in the meetings of the Six-Party Talks. We are hopeful that the agreement will be implemented and that stability and security will be restored on the Korean peninsula.

The twenty-seventh summit conference of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in Riyadh on 10 December 2006 asked the Secretary-General of the GCC to prepare a joint study on such technical uses of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes as electricity and desalination. The Secretary-General's proposal was warmly welcomed by the Director General, and the two sides have agreed to continue their consultations in the future.

Peace and stability in the region and the world may not be achieved through efforts of some States to possess weapons of mass destruction, but rather through cooperation, understanding, respect for the rights of others and refraining from imposition of hegemony and preferring self-interests over common interests. The gradual reduction of nuclear weapons will be a positive sign for a promising future for all humanity.

In conclusion, the Government of my country reaffirms that eliminating nuclear weapons represents the only guarantee against their use and the threat of their use. It also believes that the fears of many countries that do not possess nuclear weapons should be seriously taken into account in the light of the continued instability in the Middle East and the growing dangers arising from recent events in the region. That may be achieved by developing a binding international instrument that guarantees safety and stability of States that do not possess nuclear weapons. Tangible measures to build trust and enhance the security of those States must be taken.

**Mr. Shamaa** (Egypt): I would just like to refer to document A/CN.10/2007/CRP.2, entitled "Draft report of the Disarmament Commission". I have a question about paragraph 9, under the section entitled "Organization and work of the 2007 substantive session". It states there that Working Group I held two informal pre-session meetings, on 20 February and 19 March, and 11 formal meetings, from 11 to 25 April. However, when paragraph 10 refers to the work of Working Group II, it mentions only that the Group held 11 meetings, without specifying whether they were formal or informal.

I think that there might be a need just to correct the appellation for these meetings. I am not sure whether the term "pre-session meetings" is in

accordance with the agreed working methods of the Commission. If they were informal consultations, perhaps the report should call them that. According to our understanding, the substantive session takes place between the dates specified for it. Intersessional or pre-session meetings can be labelled informal consultations, but I am not sure about the term "pre-session meetings".

**The Chairman**: It seems that if we refer to the informal meetings as informal consultations rather than as pre-session meetings, that would resolve the problem. And we would make sure that the rest of the documents read accordingly.

It is my understanding, then, that the membership would agree to changing the expression "pre-session meetings" to "informal consultations".

**Mr. Vasiliyev** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): My delegation wishes to commend you, Sir, for the effective manner in which you have been working, resolving issues that otherwise would have required several additional meetings.

I have no substantive amendments to the text that we are now discussing, CRP.2. Perhaps the only amendment that I would propose would be in paragraph 2 of the report of Working Group II as it appears on page 8 of CRP.2. As I understand it, paragraph 2, which states that Mr. Santos assisted the chair "with the consensus of the Group", is referring to consent, not consensus. Unfortunately, consensus was not the case in either Working Group.

**The Chairman**: I am grateful to the representative of the Russian Federation for pointing out that issue. It was stated earlier that the expression used should be "consent", not "consensus". The text will be corrected accordingly; I appreciate the fact that the representative raised that point.

**Mr. Bouchaara** (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): For my delegation, this is not the time for the right of reply, but rather for congratulations and thanks, and it is in that spirit that I should like to take the floor.

My delegation has committed a serious faux pas, and I wish to apologize. After three weeks of work by the Disarmament Commission, I realize that I had neglected to tell you, Sir, how satisfied we have been with your chairmanship and how grateful we are to our friends and colleagues in the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States for having contributed a chair of such quality to lead our work. Thus, I wish to pay public tribute to you.

I should also like to commend the excellent chairmanship of Working Group II, on confidence-building measures, which was a source of great satisfaction and pride for me. Of course, my thanks go also to the chairmanship of Working Group I, on nuclear issues, which was courageous and carried out difficult work in quite sensitive circumstances.

Mr. Carlos Duarte — who presided over Working Group II — and I have something in common. Several years ago, we had the honour and privilege to work with a great ambassador from Mexico in Geneva, during the negotiations on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. I am speaking of Ambassador Antonio de Icaza, who was a mentor and source of inspiration for me personally.

The Moroccan delegation also provided similar support for the outstanding Mexican chairmanship during the work of the First Committee two years ago, particularly in its efforts to revitalize the work of the First Committee. I should also recall that when Mexico took the excellent initiative to organize a conference of States parties and signatories to treaties that establish nuclear-weapon-free zones, my delegation spared no effort in ensuring that the final document of that conference would be adopted by consensus.

Every time Mexico has supported multilateralism, it has found Morocco at its side, and it will continue to find us there. If Mexico had been in the situation that our friend and colleague Mr. Duarte was in several days ago, the Moroccan delegation would not have hesitated for a moment; we would have supported Mexico with the same frankness, conviction and sincerity.

I associate myself with the comment by my colleague from Mexico that it is important to focus on the real aspects. I am in full agreement. What is important for my delegation is not procedural points, but substance. And it is extremely important that we be able to preserve the atmosphere of confidence that has always prevailed in our work. We have noted in recent years that it has become increasingly difficult to adopt substantive reports. We noted with great sadness during the present session that even procedural reports were giving rise to difficulties. We are concerned by those developments, and we hope that all countries that

believe in multilateralism will seek to ensure that we can emerge from this impasse.

**Mr. Rodríguez Zahar** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I just wanted to thank the representative of Morocco for his very kind comments concerning Mexico's foreign policy.

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): As there are no other delegations requesting the floor, I propose that we proceed to the 2182nd meeting of the Disarmament Commission.

*The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.*

United Nations A/CN.10/PV.282

# General Assembly

*Official Records*

Disarmament Commission
**282**nd meeting
Friday, 27 April 2007, 11 a.m.
New York

*Chairman*: Mr. Rosselli ..... (Uruguay)

*The meeting was called to order at 11.20 a.m.*

**Report of the Disarmament Commission to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session**

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): We shall begin the final meeting of the 2007 substantive session with agenda item 6, which concerns the adoption of reports of the subsidiary bodies on the various agenda items, as well as the consideration and adoption of the draft report of the Commission, as contained in documents A/CN.10/2007/CRP.2, CRP.3 and CRP.4. These documents have been circulated to delegations.

In accordance with our programme of work, we shall first consider and adopt the Commission's report. We shall thereafter hear any closing statements that delegations may wish to make.

In order to begin the process of considering and adopting the reports of subsidiary bodies as regards the various agenda items, I shall ask the Chairmen of each Working Group to introduce their reports. I now give the floor to the representative of Benin, Mr. Jean-Francis Régis Zinsou, Chairman of Working Group I, to introduce the Group's report contained in document A/CN.10/2007/CRP.3, to which several changes were made during the recent meeting of the Committee of the Whole.

**Mr. Zinsou** (Benin) (*spoke in French*): Working Group I of the Disarmament Commission met from 11 to 25 April 2007 to consider item 4 of this session's agenda.

The draft report of the Working Group before the Commission covers the overall conduct of our proceedings. It gives references to the documents used by the Working Group and provides an overall assessment of the progress of its deliberations and of the emerging prospects for the final session of the three-year cycle now under way.

With regard to the documents, the Working Group used as a basis for its deliberations the text proposed by its Chair in the context of two meetings of informal preparatory consultations, held on 20 February and 19 March 2007. We then proceeded, from 12 to 18 April, to first and second readings of the document. The point of that exercise was to have a debate about the initial contents of the document and to take note of proposed amendments submitted by delegations, whether as groups of countries or in their national capacity, on the basis of the working papers they had presented, which are referred to in paragraph 3 of the draft report.

In that connection, delegations used, and sometimes abused, their right to propose amendments — to the extent that the document nearly doubled in size by the end of the exercise. Because of that, we are further away from the consensus that was the object of our efforts. That can be ascertained through a reading of the document referred to in paragraph 3 (g) of the draft report. Several delegations clearly distanced themselves from that document and expressed their reservations regarding continuing deliberations on the basis of a text that to them seemed to have become a catalogue of wishful thinking, wishes

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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made, in some cases, without any concern about reaching agreement. In particular, several delegations expressed the hope to avert the commencement of a contradictory debate that could jeopardize the prospects for the crucial meetings to be held in the coming weeks in the context of the disarmament and non-proliferation process.

It was in those circumstances that the Working Group asked me, through common accord, to propose, in order to proceed with our deliberations, a brief document focused on several critical points on which constructive and productive negotiations could begin in the cooperative atmosphere that I attempted to establish, which some delegations also wished to maintain.

In that regard, the document I circulated on that basis on 20 April has been issued as document A/CN.10/2007/WG.I/WP.4 and is referred to in paragraph 3 (d) of the draft report. It provides a basis for the final document of the cycle. Initial reactions to it were especially positive, and the amendments proposed during that meeting were not very numerous. Nevertheless, circumstances and considerations that were not relevant to the content of the document prevented thorough consideration of it. That still remains to be done. That is the thrust of paragraph 12 of the draft report of the Working Group.

Document WG.I/WP.4 contains 10 basic principles that I recommend for the careful consideration of Member States and the entire international community as a basis for the formulation of consensus recommendations for the implementation of the objectives of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, as requested of us by the General Assembly.

At this pivotal stage in our deliberations, I wish to urge all Member States, and especially the members of the Working Group, to make good use of the period between the two sessions in order to overcome differences of opinions, whether conceptual or procedural, that may move us further from our shared goal. That goal is indeed the adoption at the end of the cycle of a document that can serve as a new basis for a broad international consensus based on three pillars: nuclear disarmament, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the inalienable right of all States to have access to and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

To that end, we must endeavour to develop a common understanding of the real problems before us, as well as to seek solutions that prioritize the interests of the majority of humankind. I intend to hold informal consultations prior to the next session, in an effort to rally the members of the Working Group around the shared objective that our States have set within the framework of the United Nations.

That said, I would like to thank all the members of the Working Group for their active participation, diligence and determination to make progress. On behalf of the Working Group, I would also like to thank the Department for Disarmament Affairs for its support for our work through the assignment of an especially effective adviser, namely, Mr. Curtis Raynold, and his assistant, Ms. Kristin Jenssen. I would also like to thank the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, which provided us with a secretariat in the person of Mr. Sergei Cherniavsky, who, along with his assistant, Ms. Lidija Komatina, was a most useful adviser in the conduct of meetings and in the area of documentation.

In conclusion, I would like to express my faith in the political will and mutual confidence of Member States, which I ardently desire, to make progress in a cooperative way by adopting an approach based on agreement and pragmatic realism.

It is in that way that, during our last session in 2008, we can in fact put into practice our dedication to international peace and security in strict respect for the recognized rights of all Member States under the United Nations Charter. We shall certainly do so through the adoption of specific and practical recommendations on the best ways to achieve the objective of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons as an integral part of the process of general and complete disarmament.

That is the prerequisite for ensuring that the enormous resources allocated to weapons can ultimately be used to better ends, such as averting all existing dangers and improving the living conditions of the peoples of the United Nations.

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): If no delegation wishes to comment on the report of Working Group I, I understand that the Commission is ready to adopt the report, as contained in document A/CN.10/2007/CRP.3.

*It was so decided.*

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): We now turn to the report of Working Group II on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons, as contained in document A/CN.10/2007/CRP.4.

I call on the Chairman of Working Group II.

**Mr. Duarte** (Brazil), Chairman of Working Group II: The report of Working Group II that is before the Commission, as reflected in paragraph 17 on page 8 of document A/CN.10/2007/CRP.2, as amended, is a factual report on the work done by Working Group II during this session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission in discharging its mandate as regards agenda item 5, "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons".

The report shows that the Group decided at its 1st meeting to work on the basis of the Chairman's non-paper, which is contained in document A/CN.10/2007/CRP.1/Rev.3. The report also shows that the Working Group engaged in substantive discussions and consultations on the Chairman's paper, which led to the submission of two further revisions of the paper in documents CRP.1/Rev.4 and CRP.1/Rev.5, and also that document CRP.1/Rev.5 will be considered as a basis for its work at the next session of the Commission.

I would like to comment briefly on the work done by the Working Group at this session, and more specifically on the latest version of the working paper in document A/CN.10/2007/CRP.1/Rev.5.

At its first eight meetings, the Working Group held one full and thorough reading of document CRP.1/Rev.3, which was then revised and issued as document CRP.1/Rev.4. At its last three meetings, the Working Group addressed specific issues, particularly in the first three sections of the document. That led to generally acceptable formulations for various paragraphs, especially in section I, "Introduction", and section II, "Scope". Of the five sections of the document, two — sections II, "Scope", and III, "Principles" — are now free from controversial text.

In section I, "Introduction", there are two paragraphs — paragraph 1 and the new paragraph 11 — on which a great deal of effort was made to arrive at generally acceptable draftings. I believe that the Group came close to clearing those paragraphs as well. There are still some new paragraphs in section I that were proposed at this session. They will need to be discussed in depth if we are to arrive at generally agreeable formulations for them.

Sections IV, "Existing practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons", and V, "The way ahead", are those in which we find the greatest amount of remaining controversial text. I believe that those sections would also benefit from some redrafting and streamlining in order to make the document as a whole more focused and more concise. Consideration could also be given to placing the whole or some parts of section IV in an annex to the document.

The fifth revision of document A/CN.10/2007/CRP.1 reflects the latest state of affairs in the Working Group's discussions. Although progress was achieved at this session in several areas of the document, as I just pointed out, there is no doubt that much remains to be done. Bearing in mind that 2008 will mark the third and final year of the current work cycle of the Disarmament Commission, I encourage delegations to have their capitals reflect on the content of this latest version of the document that has so far served as the basis for work in Working Group II. I hope that, at the beginning of the next session, the Group will be able to carry on its work on the basis of document CRP.1/Rev.5.

Let me point out that, at the stage we are in, the Group will need to make a determined effort in order to reach general agreement on the text at our next session. Achieving that goal will require delegations to concentrate on the elements that are contained in the document and focus on areas in which the text can be further improved. It will also require delegations to propose and be prepared to consider formulas aimed at reaching general agreement. It will also require delegations to make available any new substantive proposals at the beginning of the session so that those proposals can be properly studied and, if necessary, referred back to capitals in time. And, of course, delegations will need to have the necessary flexibility to explore compromise solutions and to display the political will to adopt them.

Finally, I would like to thank all those delegations that contributed constructively to the work of the Group, as well as those persons that assisted me

in conducting the work of the Group at this session: Ms. Kristin Giles of the Disarmament and Decolonization Affairs Branch and Ms. Pamela Maponga and Mr. Hideki Matsuno of the Conventional Arms Branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs; and, last but not least, Mr. Jandyr Santos, my colleague at the permanent mission of Brazil to the United Nations.

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): As no delegation wishes to comment on the report of Working Group II, contained in document A/CN.10/2007/CRP.4, may I take it that the Commission wishes to adopt the report?

*It was so decided.*

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): Now that all the reports of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission have been adopted, I would like personally to thank the Chairmen of the two Working Groups — Mr. Jean-Francis Régis Zinsou and Mr. Carlos Duarte — as well as Mr. Jandyr Santos for their dedication in guiding the work of the two Groups. The Commission is deeply indebted to them for the way in which they guided the deliberations on two very complex issues.

We will now begin consideration of the draft report of the Disarmament Commission (A/CN.10/2007/CRP.2), which, in its final version, will reflect the changes made to the text of the reports.

I give the floor to the Rapporteur of the Commission, Mr. Bassam Darwish of the Syrian Arab Republic.

**Mr. Darwish** (Syrian Arab Republic), Rapporteur of the Commission: It is my honour and distinct pleasure to introduce to the Disarmament Commission the draft report of the Commission, as contained in document A/CN.10/2007/CRP.2.

The draft report consists of four chapters: introduction; organization and work of the 2007 substantive session; documentation; and conclusions and recommendations.

Before I move on, allow me to turn to the text of the report and to draw the attention of delegations to the following corrections thereto.

The first correction is to paragraph 2 of CRP.4. The word "consensus" should be deleted and replaced by the word "consent". That change applies also to paragraph 2, page 8, second line, of CRP.2.

The second correction relates to paragraph 8 of CRP.3, on page 2. That paragraph should read:

> "At the 9th and 10th meetings of the Working Group, on 23 and 24 April, preliminary discussions took place on specific elements contained in the different papers submitted by the Chairman as well as on other papers submitted by delegations and groups of delegations."

We have thus deleted, in the third line, the words "Chairman's working paper" as well as the bracketed information, and substituted the words "different papers submitted by the Chairman".

The third correction relates to paragraph 12 of CRP.3, on page 2. The first four words of that paragraph — "The Working Group noted" — should be deleted and replaced by the words "It is". That wording will apply also to paragraph 12 of CRP.2, on page 8.

The fourth correction relates to paragraph 9 of CRP.2, on page 5. The words "informal meetings" should be replaced by "two informal consultations".

There is another small correction on page 7 of CRP.2. In the second line from the top, the word "Department" should be deleted and replaced with the word "Office", so as to read "Office for Disarmament Affairs". The Secretariat will make that change automatically wherever necessary.

Those are the main changes and corrections to the report. Would all delegations kindly take note of them? They will, of course, be reflected in the report.

As is customary, the final report is a factual description of the Commission's work and proceedings during the session. The substantive part comprises the two reports of the Working Groups, which were just adopted by the Commission and which are part of this report. This part is a reflection of compromises and agreements reached by delegations through delicate negotiations carried out in a spirit of constructive cooperation.

The Commission discussed two items at this session, and, as usual, no parallel meetings were held.

Thus I was privileged to closely watch both Chairmen and the delegations carefully and painstakingly craft a consensus step by step on complex issues of the modern disarmament agenda. Two reports of the Working Groups, although not perfect or fully

satisfactory to everybody, will serve as a good basis for further discussions.

On agenda item 4, entitled "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons", I can say that it was a welcome occurrence that the dialogue on this urgent issue was vigorously pursued within the framework of the Disarmament Commission, through the continued and appreciated efforts of the Chairman of Working Group I. The Commission, with its deliberative mandate, allows practical and action-oriented considerations as well as conceptual approaches to the issue without being under negotiating pressure. From that viewpoint, all submitted working papers, CRPs and oral and written comments constituted the rich background against which the Group operated. All those documents, which are listed in the report adopted by Working Group I, have been forwarded to the 2008 session of the Disarmament Commission.

On agenda item 5, entitled "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons", the Chairman this year presented the Group with a non-paper, as was the case at the last session. Building on positive elements achieved during previous years, the Chairman professionally, successfully and smoothly took the Group down the path of steady progress that will, hopefully, be continued next year. Here I should not forget to offer deep thanks for the much-appreciated help from our dear colleague Mr. Jandyr Santos, who helped while the Chairman was away in Brazil. The degree of convergence of different positions and approaches to this difficult issue and the flexibility shown by delegations leave us with the hope that an agreement is still possible in the future.

I wish to take this opportunity to say that it has been a great honour to serve as the Rapporteur at this session and, particularly, to work under the able leadership of our Chairman, Mr. Elbio Rosselli. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It was a pleasure and an enriching experience to participate in the work of the Bureau, together with the Vice-Chairmen and Chairmen of the two Working Groups, who provided effective and expert guidance in the deliberations of the subsidiary bodies.

I also wish to thank the Secretary of the Commission, Mr. Timur Alasaniya, and the Secretaries of the Working Groups, whose names are listed in the report. Although I do not mention them one by one, I do thank all of them. I also thank members, consultants and Disarmament Commission staff assisting in the deliberations.

Finally, allow me to extend my sincere appreciation to the members of the Secretariat for their tireless efforts and kind assistance.

With these brief remarks, I recommend that the Commission adopt the draft report as contained in document A/CN.10/2007/CRP.2.

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Bassam Darwish the Rapporteur of the Commission, for introducing the draft report of the Disarmament Commission. I now propose that we consider the report chapter by chapter. I propose we take chapters I and II together, having to do with the introduction to the report and the organization and work of the session. Are there any comments?

I understand that the delegations have no comments. We can therefore take as adopted chapters I and II.

*It was so agreed.*

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): I propose that we now consider chapter III, on documentation for this session. Are there any comments on this chapter?

No delegation is requesting the floor. I take it that the Commission wishes to adopt chapter III.

*It was so agreed.*

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): I now propose that we examine chapter IV, on conclusions and recommendations. Are there any comments on chapter IV?

There are no comments. I take it that chapter IV is adopted.

*It was so agreed.*

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): We have thus adopted the full report of the Disarmament Commission at its substantive session for 2007.

*It was so agreed.*

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to make some very brief remarks. As Chairman, in my introductory statement on the opening day of our

session, I said that the Commission, just like any multilateral body, can only be as good as the collective will of its members. I think that in this session — which has been very special because it is the intermediate year in the three-year cycle — we have taken a small step forward in the work of the Commission. The discussions in the Working Groups were substantive. We are, of course, far from reaching substantial agreements, but delegations clearly participated — on occasion, with, I understand, a lot of enthusiasm — which has generated interesting debates. I believe we still need more substance, more debate and more participation next year.

We were very happy that the Secretary-General came to open this session of the Disarmament Commission. That shows the great interest that the Secretary-General has in this particular item on the United Nations agenda, and we are pleased that he was able to accompany us at this session.

I do not want to extend these remarks any further. The participants here are the true actors of this Commission. To them, I owe my gratitude for their active participation.

Let me turn briefly to follow-up of our work. As members may recall, in my opening statement I spoke about practical ways for the implementation of resolution 61/98. On behalf of the Bureau, I asked for guidance from the Commission on this matter. At a certain point the Chairman was asked to submit a non-paper containing several possible options on participation of experts and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and on possible changes in the structure of deliberations in plenary and Working Group meetings.

With the assistance of Bureau members and based on brief and limited consultations, I distributed a Chairman's non-paper, entitled "Implementation of resolution 61/98 and additional proposals on participation of NGOs". I hope that everybody has received copies. I neither want nor expect members to discuss the issue at this late stage of the Commission's work. The idea was to raise the matter and provide some guidelines so that delegations can consult their capitals and engage in some exchanges of views. If delegations are willing, we can return to this non-paper some time during the summer and have an informal consultation on any measures we might adopt for the implementation of the resolution.

I wish now to speak of a matter of importance in the sphere of disarmament.

This coming Sunday, 29 April 2007, the States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction will mark the tenth anniversary of the Convention's entry into force. This is the first disarmament agreement negotiated within a multilateral framework that provides for the elimination of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction under universally applied international control.

To date, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) has conducted some 2,800 inspections to ensure the total destruction of stockpiled weapons and to ensure the non-proliferation of chemical weapons and their precursors. I would like to congratulate the States parties to the Convention and the OPCW for their efforts towards building a world free of chemical weapons.

To commemorate this anniversary, Her Majesty Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands will unveil a permanent memorial dedicated to all victims of chemical weapons, in a ceremony to be held at The Hague on 9 May. The memorial will remind the world of the countless people who have been killed or wounded due to the use of chemical weapons throughout history. It will also serve as an important symbol of our shared duty to ensure that future generations will never experience the horror of these weapons.

The Commission will now hear concluding statements by delegations.

**Mr. Oh Joon** (Republic of Korea): On behalf of my delegation, and as Chair of the Disarmament Commission at last year's session, I would like to express our deep gratitude to you, Mr. Chairman, for having led this year's substantive session of the Commission to a meaningful conclusion. I believe we have made steady progress in all our work, building on last year's groundwork, even though much still remains to be done in order to reach full agreement.

In the face of the immense challenges facing the disarmament and non-proliferation system, it is not easy to navigate among the many divergent interests and positions and achieve consensus on difficult issues. It would have been even better if we could have

achieved more. However, I think the discussions we had and the efforts we made to narrow the gaps among our views have been invaluable in and of themselves.

In addition to your own efforts, Mr. Chairman, we particularly appreciate the hard work of the two Working Group Chairs, Mr. Jean-Francis Régis Zinsou of Benin and Mr. Carlos Duarte of Brazil. My delegation will continue to extend to them our full support and to do our part in striving for a successful conclusion of this three-year cycle of debate. We look forward to working closely with all of our colleagues again next year.

**Mr. Ruddyard** (Indonesia): First of all, Mr. Chairman, I would like to join the previous speaker in thanking you. We appreciate the way in which you have conducted our meetings. On behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, I congratulate you on the outcome of this session. Our appreciation goes also to the other members of the Bureau for the way in which they helped you conclude the session in an excellent manner.

We wish also to thank the Chairs of Working Group I and Working Group II for their tireless efforts in conducting the Group meetings and in preparing the various working papers. We understand the hard work they faced, and we salute them for their efforts. Furthermore, we acknowledge our colleagues in other delegations for engaging in the Working Group meetings in a spirit of cooperation and for showing flexibility in the discussion of issues that are relevant to us.

Our appreciation goes also to the Secretariat staff for their tremendous efforts in assisting the work of the Commission and for their contribution to the success of the session.

It is our hope that the discussion over the past three weeks can provide a good basis for next year's session; it shows that so far we have made excellent progress. We reaffirm our commitment to continue our constructive and transparent engagement in the next year of this cycle of Disarmament Commission meetings. That is because of the importance we attach to the Commission, in particular in advancing the issue of nuclear disarmament.

**Mr. Shamaa** (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish, Mr. Chairman, to congratulate you sincerely on your wise leadership of the 2007 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission. Through you, we thank the Chairmen of the two Working Groups. Our thanks go also to Mr. Timur Alasaniya, Secretary of the Commission; Mr. Ioan Tudor; Mr. Sergei Cherniavsky, Secretary of Working Group I; Ms. Christa Giles, Secretary of Working Group II; and all other members of the Secretariat staff who assisted us in moving our work forward.

We are confident, Sir, that your efforts this year will help build a constructive consensus leading to the attainment of our ultimate objective: the total elimination of all nuclear weapons, in the service of the cause of peace and security for humankind.

**Mr. Vasiliyev** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): My delegation would like to join previous speakers in expressing its gratitude to you, Mr. Chairman, the Chairmen of the two Working Groups, the Vice-Chairmen and the secretariat of the Disarmament Commission for their assistance in our productive work.

At the beginning of this session, my delegation expressed its readiness to constructively promote the work of the Commission and of its Working Groups. Today, we see that a number of results have been achieved in that work. At the same time, I wish to note that very important work lies ahead next year and that substantive events might occur before then that could directly affect our work.

In particular, I wish to note that President Putin, in a statement before the Federal Assembly yesterday, raised several issues that directly affect the work of our body. In particular, he raised the issue of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. An unacceptable situation is currently developing in which the Treaty is actually being implemented by only one side. Thus, the logic of the Treaty — which is predicated on ensuring a balance of forces between the two major sources of power that emerged in Europe in the 1990s — has been completely subverted. Therefore, we are now raising the issue of a moratorium on the Treaty. We hope that our Treaty partners will reach the necessary conclusions so that next year we will not be discussing leaving the Treaty.

Unfortunately, a similar situation is now developing with respect to another important strategic agreement: the system for anti-ballistic-missile defense. The decision to employ an ABM system could lead to a situation in which strategic armed forces

could emerge on the European continent for the first time since the cold war era. Of course, that would affect the prospects for, inter alia, nuclear disarmament.

In his statement, referring to the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention, President Putin noted that on 9 May Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands will be unveiling a monument to the victims of chemical weapons. The ninth of May is an extremely significant date for Europe, for on that day the Second World War ended in Europe. We can only welcome the fact that a country will be unveiling a memorial in connection with that date. Unfortunately, in other European countries — here, I am thinking of Estonia — such monuments are being destroyed. A genuine war on monuments has been declared — a war that, as we can already see from media reports, has claimed victims.

As my delegation would like our work to conclude on a positive note, we express the hope that all of these negative elements will be eliminated so that we can all continue our work next year in a constructive and effective manner.

**Mr. Brasack** (Germany): I am taking the floor on behalf of the European Union (EU). On behalf of the EU, I would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the able leadership that you have provided during this year's session of the Disarmament Commission, and particularly during today's meeting. Both during the initial plenary meetings and in the Bureau, you have provided the guidance necessary to lead the Commission to a result, without restricting the liberty of action of the Working Groups or their Chairs.

In particular, through you, Mr. Chairman, I would like to commend the Chairmen of the two Working Groups. They were faced with complex and difficult issues in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation, against a generally political background, which was not conducive to achieving an outcome that can serve as a basis to be built upon at next year's final session of the Commission's three-year cycle. That is why I would also like to express my appreciation to all delegations whose constructive cooperation made this year's results possible. The European Union is confident that in 2008 we can build successfully on this year's results.

Before the start of this year's session of the Commission, the EU stated its conviction that the ultimate aim was a substantial outcome at the end of the three-year cycle of the Commission, but that, if we were to reach that aim, the first objective for this year must be to engage in substantive debates. I think we can say that that goal was achieved. We had difficult but substantive debates, which have brought us closer to a successful session next year. We hope that the results that we have all achieved will serve as an encouragement for the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which will begin next week in Vienna.

Finally, let me thank the three Chairpersons once again for their work and compliment them on the outcome of our conference. I am looking forward to seeing them next week in Vienna or in the First Committee in New York.

**Mr. Benítez Versón** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We have concluded three weeks of intense work. The Disarmament Commission has shown that it continues to be a useful body within the disarmament machinery, which we all have the responsibility to preserve. We had debates, which are of great value in and of themselves. Occasionally, the discussions were intense, including many of the discussions on the issue of procedure — particularly in Working Group I — which, Cuba believes, could have been avoided. But what is important is that, in general, a serious and very professional exchange of views prevailed.

Can we be fully satisfied with the results of this session? Of course not. Cuba regrets that we were not able to make more progress, particularly in formulating concrete recommendations aimed at making progress in achieving nuclear disarmament.

Once again, we note with concern that not all States possess the political will that is needed to achieve genuine progress towards that objective.

For Cuba, nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons remain the most urgent and highest priority in the disarmament sphere. That is why we are not prepared to be satisfied with empty documents devoid of commitments and concrete recommendations on nuclear disarmament. During this session, the Non-Aligned Movement submitted a very broad and detailed working document setting out principles and concrete recommendations aimed at making progress towards nuclear disarmament. That was further confirmation of the high priority that the

Movement attaches to that objective — a priority that Cuba fully shares.

We believe that Working Group II, on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons, succeeded in creating conditions that could facilitate the adoption of a consensus document next year. In our view, the Group's efforts in 2008 must focus essentially on the path to be followed in the future. It is Cuba's view that the most recent revision of the working document submitted by the Chair of Working Group II should be the basis for continued deliberations next year. That text appropriately reflects the state of affairs, including on outstanding issues.

Let me conclude, Mr. Chairman, by congratulating you, the other members of the Bureau and the Secretariat staff for your excellent work. In particular, we recognize the considerable endeavours of the Chairmen of the two Working Groups, who gave their all to carry out their difficult tasks.

**Mr. Pardeshi** (India): My delegation would like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your very skilful conduct of this year's session of the Disarmament Commission. We would like to commend the Chairmen of the two Working Groups, as well as all the other members of the Bureau and the Secretariat staff, for their dedication to the work of the Commission.

In Working Group I, delegations, including ours, presented several working papers and conference room papers. The Chairman, with the aim of guiding our deliberations, presented papers, including his working paper of 25 April. The latter is a short document which will require substantial elaboration, adjustment and improvement in order to formulate global and non-discriminatory principles and universally applicable recommendations for achieving the objective of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament in a balanced and comprehensive manner. My delegation has remained engaged in discussions, presenting suggestions for improvements in the text, and it will continue to do so constructively during the intersessional period and during the 2008 session. When we resume next year, we will have before us a collection of good working papers and conference room papers to work on. I might also add that an improved atmosphere of mutual trust, accommodation, understanding and transparency will help very much in making further progress in the work of the Working Group.

My delegation shares the assessment of the Chairman of Working Group II that the fifth revised version of his non-paper actually reflects the latest state of affairs in the substantive discussions. Our delegation is prepared to work on the basis of his revised non-paper so that we can make good progress next year and arrive at an agreement on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons.

**Mr. Apolinar Espinal** (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation is speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, which wishes to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your efforts in leading this session of the Disarmament Commission. Our thanks go also to the Chairmen of the two Working Groups for their efforts. We hope that we will be able next year to achieve concrete results on the issues under discussion.

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): As this session comes to a close, I wish to express my gratitude to all members for their participation and their work in both plenary and Working Group meetings. I thank, in particular, my colleagues in the Bureau, who constantly helped me guide the work of the Commission. We met often and exchanged many views, thus facilitating the work of the entire membership.

I wish also to thank all members of the Commission secretariat; it would take a great deal of time to name them all. All its members have done excellent work and have provided great and discreet support as they guided me, the other officers and the general membership. My thanks go to the secretariats of the Working Groups and the staff of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management and the Office for Disarmament Affairs, as well as to the interpreters — who do combat with each of our statements, word by word — the documents officers and the conference officers. I thank them all.

**Closure of the session**

**The Chairman** (*spoke in Spanish*): I declare closed the 2007 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission.

*The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.*